



KOREAN-AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION

English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Handbook
2011-2012

Edited by

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We must try, through international education, to realize something new in the world -- a purpose that will inspire us and challenge us to use our talents and material wealth in a new way, by persuasion rather than force, cooperatively rather than competitively, not with the intention of gaining dominance for a nation or an ideology, but for the purpose of helping every society develop its own concept of public decency and individual fulfillment.

- Senator J. William Fulbright

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Introduction to the ETA Handbook

The *ETA Handbook* is a compilation of information collected from past ETAs and current Fulbright staff members. Its purpose is to prepare ETAs for their arrival in Korea by giving relevant, general background information and vital details in regards to preparation for the ETA year. This version of the *ETA Handbook* supersedes all other information published about the Fulbright Korea ETA Program, including past *Handbook* editions and information on the Fulbright Korea website, which may be outdated. Thus, **it is imperative that you carefully familiarize yourself with all of the material contained herein prior to your arrival.**

Questions about the ETA program should be posted in the “FAQs” forum on the ETA Bulletin Board (ETAB: <http://eta-board.fulbright.or.kr/>). You may also contact the ETA Program Coordinator (eta.coordinator@fulbright.or.kr) if your question is of a more personal nature.

ETA Program Background and Introduction

The Fulbright Korea English Teaching Assistant Program began in the fall of 1992, when eight Americans arrived in Korea to teach English in middle and high schools. The program has grown tremendously since then, with approximately eighty incoming English Teaching Assistants (ETAs) confirmed for the 2011-2012 year. The Korean-American Educational Commission (KAEC), Korean Ministry of Education, and U.S. Institute of International Education jointly organize, select, and develop the guidelines for the program.

Unlike most Fulbright grants, which focus on research, the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship is primarily a teaching position. ETAs typically teach from late August to mid-July, including supplementary classes held during the two-month winter vacation. Many ETAs also use the long winter break period to conduct individual research projects, study Korean, hold an internship in Korea, or travel around Asia. ETAs are “cultural ambassadors” and therefore are encouraged to take advantage of the many opportunities they will have to learn more about Korean culture and to share their own culture with Koreans.

To help ETAs adjust to life in Korea and prepare for the challenges of working in a Korean school and living in a homestay environment, KAEC holds an **intensive** Orientation training program each summer for new ETAs. At the end of this Orientation period, ETAs move to their teaching assignments. New ETAs are placed in schools throughout Korea, *excluding Seoul*. All first-year ETAs are required to live in a Korean homestay, which is provided by the placement school.

During the academic year, Fulbright reunites ETAs for two conferences. Past years’ conferences were held in Gyeongju (located on the mainland) and in Seogwipo (located on Jeju Island). Officially, the conferences are forums to share teaching ideas, handle organizational tasks, and hear from guest speakers. They are also excellent opportunities for ETA networking, cultural discussions, and problem solving. Significant improvements in the ETA program have developed over the years as a result of these workshops.

The Fulbright Office

The Korean-American Educational Commission (KAEC) operates the Fulbright Program from its office in Seoul. The KAEC staff maintains contact with ETAs throughout the year by phone, email, and through program workshops. ETAs are expected to inform KAEC staff of any

important plans, changes, or problems that they encounter during their grant period. In addition to the ETA Program, KAEC also manages the U.S. Education Center, ETS testing facilities, and the Fulbright Research Grant Program.

Key Staff Members

- **Mrs. Jai Ok Shim**, Executive Director: Mrs. Shim has more than 20 years of experience with Fulbright. She previously worked with the Peace Corps and has an MBA from Yonsei University in Seoul.
- **Mrs. Puhui Im**, Program Officer: Mrs. Im works with the both the ETA and Research branches of the Fulbright program. She maintains contact with many of the ETAs' host schools and works to improve those relationships.
- **Mrs. Young Sook Lee**, Program Assistant: Mrs. Lee organizes various ETA programs, including workshops and Orientation logistics. She also serves as a liaison between ETAs and their host schools, when necessary.
- **Mrs. Kee Won Lee**, Secretary: Mrs. Lee works in the front office on the third floor. She handles logistical concerns.
- **Mrs. Mun Kyung Yu**, Senior Education Advisor: Mrs. Yu works with the U.S. Education Center and Camp Fulbright. Until several years ago, she worked with the ETA Program.
- **Mrs. Sung Won Park**, Accountant: Mrs. Park takes care of financial matters, such as ETA shipping reimbursements and other ETA Program costs.
- **Stephen Kim**, ETA Program Coordinator, 2011-2012: Stephen works with the ETA Program, acting as the chief liaison between the ETAs and KAEC. He was a 2010-2011 ETA.
- **James McFadden**, Executive Assistant, 2011-2012: James assists the Executive Director and other Fulbright staff in working with the Fulbright Research Programs. He was a 2010-2011 ETA.
- **Laura Kennedy, Emilee Lehenbauer, Stephen Kim, James McFadden, Bryce Mitchell, and Rebecca Stewart**, Orientation Coordinators (OCs): Laura, Emilee, Stephen, James, Bryce, and Rebecca will facilitate this summer's Orientation program. Laura has spent the last three years as an ETA and is the Chief Coordinator for the 2011 ETA Orientation. Emilee has been an ETA since 2009 and is the Senior Coordinator for this year's Orientation. Stephen, James, Bryce, and Rebecca are current 2010-2011 ETAs.

Getting Ready to Go

Passport

You must bring a passport valid for at least six months after the expected arrival date in Korea (ideally, for the entire grant period). Passports can be renewed at any time, even if there are some months remaining until the expiration date. To apply for a passport, obtain an application at a local post office or the passport services website (<http://travel.state.gov/passport/>).

Passports should be kept in personal possession at all times while traveling to or from Korea, or in a secure place if staying in one place for an extended period. Lost or stolen passports should be reported to the U.S. Embassy immediately. Any U.S. Embassy can issue a new passport within a few days for a small fee. Fulbright recommends making at least two photocopies of the passport picture page and the Korean visa. One copy should be left at home and one brought with you to Korea. This will make getting a replacement easier in the event of a lost or stolen passport. It is smart to bring an extra set of passport photos as well. However, passport photos can also be taken after your arrival in Korea for a minimal fee at most photo developing shops.

It is also recommended that ETAs bring an additional form of identification with a recent photograph, such as a driver's license or university ID card. Upon arrival, Fulbright will provide ETAs with a Fulbright identification card and an IYTC or ISIC (International Youth Travel Card or International Student Identity Card) from STA Travel.

If you plan to travel extensively during the winter break, you may want to plan ahead and get extra passport pages before leaving America.

Visa

The Fulbright Program in Korea operates under the authority of a bi-national agreement between the Republic of Korea and the United States governments. This agreement entitles Fulbright grantees to an "A-3" or "agreement" visa status. This is a special visa status that exempts the holder from the residence control law and permits a stay in Korea for the full period of the award without mandatory extension requests or other administrative procedures. The A-3 visa status reflects the "official" nature of a Fulbright grantee's sojourn in Korea.

ETAs should request a visa application form from the Korean Consulate General Office in their geographic region (http://www.dynamic-korea.com/consulate_service/information2.php). Be sure to request an "A-3 Fulbright Visa." ETAs should state that they are Fulbright grant

recipients but should **not** indicate that they will be teaching (to eliminate any confusion about visa status). Include with the visa application (http://www.dynamic-korea.com/docs_data/form11.pdf) copies of the IIE and KAEC appointment letters, as well as a self-addressed stamped envelope to have the visa mailed back to you. Do not mail your passport via regular mail. Overnight mail is the most secure, in which case your SASE will also need to be a pre-paid overnight mail envelope. **You must send in your passport with your visa application in order to receive a visa!** There is no fee for an A-3 Visa.

ETAs should request at least a 20-month visa. In the past, some consulates have given only 14-month visas that expired before the grant ended. ETAs who are unable to obtain an A-3 Fulbright Visa, or a visa for the correct length of time, may still come to Korea without a visa. American citizens automatically receive a 30-day visitor permit at the airport. Within that period the KAEC office will arrange for the visa status to be changed to the correct A-3 status and/or the correct length of time. Notify the ETA Program Coordinator immediately if you have any difficulty obtaining a visa or if you require a visa extension.

Travel Arrangements to Korea

A round-trip flight between the U.S. and Seoul is paid for by the Fulbright program. ETAs will receive travel and ticketing information from the Fulbright office in May or June. Please note that the costs for travel plans to other locations en route to Korea are not covered by the Fulbright grant. The required arrival time in Korea is the morning of July 3, 2011. ETAs should not make reservations on their own, unless specifically told to do so.

Medical Considerations

Medical Clearance

ETAs must submit the IIE medical form to the New York office and have it approved *before* they can be issued a plane ticket to Korea. IIE will send the medical form to you. Do this ASAP, as it takes several weeks to receive clearance from IIE. Please note that Korea does not require an HIV test for Americans entering the country.

Inoculations

Korean government regulations do not require any inoculations of travelers except for those arriving from plague, yellow fever, or cholera-infected areas. Some physicians recommend inoculations against such diseases as cholera, hepatitis, polio, tetanus, typhoid, and typhus. A

physician should be consulted before deciding whether or not to obtain these or any other inoculations. The CDC is also a reliable source for information (<http://www.cdc.gov>).

The following vaccinations are recommended by Dr. John Linton, MD, a U.S.-certified physician and Director of the International Health Care Center at Yonsei University's Severance Hospital:

Very Important

- Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus (DPT): Updated every 10 years with a single booster. If not updated in the last ten years, it is necessary to start the series over. It is *very important* to do this before leaving the U.S., as reliable serum is in short supply in Korea.
- Hepatitis B: Three shots over three months (1 month interval between the first two). A booster should be administered every five years. Hepatitis B is common in Korea. ETAs should try to receive as many of the shots as possible before leaving the U.S. The series can be completed in Korea.
- Influenza: Annually. Available in Korea.

Sometimes Recommended

- Hepatitis A: A new vaccine does exist and has been approved in Europe. It is available in Asia, and some doctors recommend it for foreigners living in Asia.
- Japanese B Encephalitis: Two or three shots, separated by one or two weeks with a booster every three years. This disease exists in Korea although it is *extremely* unlikely that a foreigner will contract it. Since the consequences are serious, immunization is sometimes recommended. It is possible to be vaccinated after an epidemic is reported.

NOTE: Twinrix, the combination Hepatitis A and B shot, is *not* available in Korea. These courses must be done separately as explained above.

Not Considered Important for Korea

All of these vaccines can be obtained in Korea in the unlikely event that there is an outbreak of the disease:

- Cholera
- Pneumovax
- Typhoid

NOTE: Gamma globulin is a human serum-derived product and is *not* recommended. Injections of gamma globulin previously recommended for travelers have largely been replaced by the use of hepatitis A vaccine.

Although it is best to obtain inoculations before departure, most inoculations are readily available in Korea. To avoid unnecessary discomfort while traveling, it is recommended that inoculations obtained in the U.S. be completed at least one week prior to departure. Also, those planning to travel outside of Korea during the year should check the health recommendations for those specific countries. The International Traveler's Hotline (800-232-4636) run by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention can provide this information (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>).

H5N1: Avian Influenza Virus (Bird Flu)

At the end of 2003, South Korean officials confirmed one suspected case of a mild strain of the avian influenza virus. The case was found in ducks, which were all isolated and disposed of by September 2004. Again in November 2006, South Korea confirmed an H5N1 bird flu outbreak in one region south of Seoul; infected poultry was quarantined and slaughtered. There was another outbreak of H5N1 reported in April 2008, which spread to 10 provinces; all cases were eradicated within two months.. The most recent outbreak of H5N1 was reported in December 2010; cases have been documented among wild bird and poultry populations in six different provinces as recently as March 28th. No cases have been reported in humans. The latest information on the current situation of the H5N1 avian influenza virus, also affecting other parts of Africa, Asia, and Europe, can be found on the CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/outbreaks/current.htm>).

H1N1 (Swine Flu)

Although the rate of infection of the H1N1 flu virus in Korea did reach pandemic levels in late 2009, the spread of the disease was contained and eliminated within a few months. In August 2010, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared an end to the global pandemic of the H1N1 virus. It is recommended to get the seasonal influenza vaccine, which will protect you against all current flu viruses, including H3N2, influenza B, and H1N1.

ETAs should not consider contracting any of the aforementioned diseases in South Korea a serious risk. However, ETAs who plan to travel to other countries in the region should pay attention to announcements from the local government in order to monitor the local health and security situation. In addition to the CDC's Travelers' Health website and the U.S. Department of State website, these announcements may come in many ways, such as through the local news media of that region. For more information, consult the CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/>) and the WHO website (<http://www.who.int>).

In the event of a disease outbreak, the Korean Government will take serious precautions to inhibit the spread of the disease and ensure that those entering the country are not infected. Upon arrival at the airport, if there is a present threat, you may encounter thermometer checks and/or body temperature scans before being allowed to pass through immigration.

Mental Health and Well-Being

Mental health facilities are limited in Korea, which means English-speaking licensed professionals may not be readily accessible. Because you will have been medically approved by IIE, Fulbright assumes you to be healthy at the time your grant period begins. If an issue arises that requires medical attention, Fulbright will do everything possible to help you establish an appropriate contact; however, individuals with past histories of depression, eating disorders, or other mental health disorders should think seriously about their ability to cope and adjust in Korean society. Koreans are very up-front and honest about their feelings and perceptions, which sometimes comes as a surprise to Americans. Koreans largely consider comments about someone's weight and appearance as acceptable as talk of the weather. In the past, male and female ETAs have been subject to equal amounts of scrutiny and blunt comments regarding their appearance. Many ETAs cite this as shocking at first but something they either get used to or ignore as the year goes on.

Regardless of whether or not you have a past history of mental health issues, it would be wise to develop a strong support network during Orientation. This support network will help you through difficult times and provide a "sounding board" off which you can voice your concerns and issues. As ETAs, you are the only ones who will know exactly what each other is going through during your adjustments to Korean culture, school life, and the homestay. Friends and family back home are also good support systems to utilize. Email, Skype, and instant messaging are common outlets for ETAs to stay connected with their support networks at home.

Past ETAs recommend joining a gym or pursuing something else that will help you stay active throughout the year. ETAs have commented that their daily workouts were also their "mental break" time and a good way for them to relax and reflect.

Living in any foreign country for a sustained period of time offers its own unique challenges. It is important that you develop tools for managing and minimizing these stressors as they occur throughout the year. Throughout Orientation, the Orientation Coordinators (OCs) will be committed to helping you establish networks, cope with culture shock, and further support your adjustment in any way possible.

Medications

Those currently taking medication should bring prescriptions and all pertinent medical information a doctor might need in the event of an emergency. In addition to prescriptions, bring any over-the-counter medicines used on a regular basis (cold medicine, Tylenol, ibuprofen, Sudafed, etc.), as they are not often found in Korean pharmacies. It is also a good idea to bring an anti-diarrheal, such as Pepto Bismol, which can prevent indigestion and bacterial diarrhea if taken immediately; however, use caution when taking anti-diarrheal medications, as the cause of diarrhea in Korea is often requires an inexpensive antibiotic (ciprofloxacin) prescribed by a doctor. It has been recommended in the past that ETAs do not take Imodium, which is tailored to bacterial cases different from those present in Korea. You may want to talk to your doctor about bringing ciprofloxacin for intestinal infections. Some doctors recommend taking acidophilus to cure minor digestive problems by restoring the normal bacterial flora in the body. Multi-vitamin and calcium supplements are also useful while adjusting to the Korean diet but tend to be more expensive in Korea. Past ETAs recommend bringing an entire year's supply of medications to avoid the pains of having them shipped later or finding the right equivalent at the Korean pharmacy.

Many ETAs report getting sick (mainly colds) in Korea more often than in the U.S. This may be due to a variety of factors, including daily contact with students, closer living quarters, and the culture of sharing food. For this reason, it is recommended that you bring more cold medicines and vitamins than you might otherwise plan. Past ETAs recommend emergency vitamin supplements such as Airborne and Emergen-C.

Medical Care

There are competent physicians, surgeons, and dentists in all the major cities in Korea. Many are American-trained and speak English fluently. Outpatient clinics of hospitals are preferable to private clinics, and it is best to make an appointment, rather than visit the Emergency Room (unless it is a true emergency). The best hospitals in Seoul are Severance (which is associated with Yonsei University), the Asan Medical Center, St. Mary's Hospital, Samsung Hospital, Paek Hospital, and the National Medical Center associated with Seoul National University.

The facility with the most experience in the treatment of the foreign community is the International Health Care Center of Severance Hospital (http://www.yuhs.or.kr/en/inter_healthcare_center/), which is part of the Yonsei University College of Medicine in Seoul and directed by Dr. John Linton. Appointments are available, from 9:00 to 12:00 in the morning and from 2:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon on weekdays. Walk-ins are

also welcome, but the wait time can be significant. On Saturday mornings the clinic is open specifically for walk-ins from 9:00am to 12:00pm. The phone number is (02) 2228-5810. The staff can refer patients to Korean specialists throughout the hospital who speak English.

For ETAs who cannot come to Seoul for treatment, there are numerous quality hospitals throughout Korea. Additionally, many minor ailments (common colds, allergies, etc.) can be treated at local clinics very inexpensively. Ask your co-teacher and homestay for advice before trekking all the way to Seoul for service. Co-teachers or homestays generally assist ETAs who have fallen sick, but ETAs should notify the Fulbright office immediately in the event of medical emergencies or serious ailments.

Payment for medical service is required at the time of service. Major hospitals and clinics accept credit card payment. Plan to pay for all medical care at the time of service and seek reimbursement from the State Department health insurance later. Bring medical forms to be filled out by the doctor to the appointment in order to avoid delays in reimbursement (available for download on the US Department of State Seven Corners website:

<http://usdos.sevencorners.com/forms/>) In the event of major emergency medical expenses, Fulbright will provide necessary financial assistance.

Health Insurance

The U.S. State Department provides grantees with basic health insurance during the period of the grant. Vaccinations, dental work, and vision are not included in this plan. There is a \$15 deductible for each incident of medical care. This plan is contracted on a reimbursement basis: ETAs pay for medical services up-front and then submit their receipts and claim forms to the insurance company. The insurance company in the U.S. will then follow up with the claim and issue a reimbursement check. The total process can take two to six months to complete. For more information about the State Department basic health insurance plan, please see the ASPE (Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges) website (<http://usdos.sevencorners.com>).

Note that the State Department's insurance policy only covers ETAs while they are in Korea. In order to provide insurance for travel outside of Korea during the grant period, each ETA will receive an IYTC or ISIC (International Youth Travel Card or International Student Identity Card) through STA Travel in the U.S. This card provides travel and health insurance while traveling anywhere OUTSIDE the U.S. For more information about IYTC benefits, please visit the IYTC website (<https://www.myisic.com/MyISIC/Travel/Main.aspx?MenuID=5004>).

You will receive more specific information about your insurance policy at the beginning of Orientation. At that time, we will explain the insurance reimbursement process and also have you fill out the application for your IYTC or ISIC.

Some ETAs may be able to extend their coverage in the U.S. under parental insurance plans because a Fulbright grant is considered a graduate fellowship. Contact your insurance provider for more information.

Medical Talk

During Orientation, you will receive a “medical talk” given by a licensed, native English-speaking doctor. This doctor will thoroughly cover medical considerations for one living in Korea and provide emergency contact information you might need if you require assistance during the year. If you have specific medical questions, please write them down and bring them to Orientation for this talk.

Prescription Glasses and Contacts

Prescription glasses and contacts can be easily obtained and are generally cheaper in Korea than in the U.S. A comprehensive examination, frames, and lenses can cost as little as \$60. Many American-brand contact solutions are also available in Korea.

Luggage & Personal Items

Airline Baggage

The easiest and cheapest way to ship belongings to Korea is to bring it on the plane as accompanied baggage. Each economy passenger is generally entitled to check up to two pieces of baggage, neither of which may weigh more than 50-70 lbs, depending on the carrier. The three combined dimensions of each piece of checked baggage generally may not exceed 62”. Each passenger is also allowed to have one piece of carry-on luggage, which should be small enough to fit under a passenger seat or overhead compartment. This can be accompanied by a purse or laptop. ETAs should note carry-on restrictions for liquids and gels; visit the TSA website for details (<http://www.tsa.gov/311/index.shtm>). Additional belongings can be brought on the plane as unaccompanied baggage. Airlines usually have a standard excess-baggage charge, regardless of weight (up to the maximum). Normally this is cheaper per pound, much faster, and much safer than international mail. Check with your specific airline carrier to determine exact baggage limits and applicable excess-baggage fees.

Shipping

International mail can also be used to send baggage. See Appendix B for the appropriate addresses. Shipping options include the following:

Surface Mail: Arrives by boat and takes 2-3 months. This is the cheapest option. The U.S. Postal Service is the most reliable shipping service.

USPS Air Mail, FedEx, DHL, UPS: These shipping options are fast but significantly more expensive than surface mail. Airmail takes 1-2 weeks. FedEx, DHL, and UPS can deliver within one week.

APO (*for educational materials only, and only during Orientation*): See below for more information.

Overall, the international shipping system is fairly reliable; however, ETAs should be careful about shipping valuables. Packages sometimes arrive already opened or with contents missing (e.g., CDs, electronic equipment). Used items and winter clothing are not at risk of being stolen. The safest way to transport valuables is to *bring them on the plane* or use a more expensive shipping option, such as DHL, which provides package tracking and insurance. Used and new items may be subject to customs charges, if the items are valuable. Generally, packages with a declared value of over \$150 may be taxed (<http://english.customs.go.kr/>) **Do not** send computers through the mail. In the past, ETAs have been charged up to \$300 in tax after sending their laptops to Korea via mail.

APO

By authorization of the U.S. State Department, Fulbright grantees coming to Korea are permitted to mail small quantities of educational materials (books and printed materials *ONLY*) through “APO,” the U.S. military postal system, which is the cheapest means of shipping. *Important*: The U.S. Department of State sets limits on the quantity and weight of educational materials sent via APO. Prior to the start of Orientation, Fulbright grantees are authorized to send a single shipment (all mailed at the same time) of no more than *four* boxes, none of which can weigh more than 40 pounds. All APO shipments must arrive in Korea no later than August 1st; to ensure their arrival, mail them 3-4 weeks before leaving the U.S. For mailing authorized educational materials, use the following APO address:

Cultural Affairs Officer
Public Affairs Office (KAEC)
American Embassy

Unit # 15550

APO AP 96205-0001

As the above address indicates, the packages must be addressed to the Cultural Affairs Officer. *Do not address the packages to yourself.* The ETA's name **must** be on each package as the *sender* and *only* as the sender. As a backup means of identification, ETAs should enclose a slip of paper with their name, home address, and the words "Fulbright Grantee to Korea" inside each package. Failure to follow these instructions may result in delays and additional costs as the packages may be returned to the sender. Note that because the packages are addressed to the Cultural Affairs Officer and not to individual ETAs, they can be opened for inspection without violating mail privacy laws to ensure that the contents are purely educational materials.

ETAs are only authorized to send materials via APO to Korea and will not be authorized to return them to the U.S. via APO. Thus, ETAs are independently responsible for sending home any materials brought to Korea. Fulbright grantees are **not** authorized to use the APO system except for these one-time shipments of *educational materials* just prior to arrival in Korea. **Do not** give the APO address to colleagues, family, or friends for routine use.

Note that "educational materials" means books and printed materials only (including books, magazines, newspapers, and maps for classroom use). Computers, games, prizes – no matter how "educational" they are – are not allowed through the APO mailing privilege. All personal effects (clothing, household items, camera equipment for personal use, etc.) must be brought as accompanying baggage or sent through any other available channel as unaccompanied baggage. *No exceptions are possible.* Personal items and things arriving later than August 1st are routinely returned to the sender by the Embassy mailroom. Use of the APO is a very special consideration given to us, the misuse of which could result in it being revoked for all Fulbright grantees.

ETAs' APO boxes may be sent through USPS Media Mail, which is cheaper than First Class mail and takes anywhere from 3-8 weeks to arrive in Korea. ETAs should request "Media Mail" and certify that the boxes contain only printed material in order to receive the discounted Media Mail rate.

Excess Baggage Allowance

An excess baggage allowance of \$200 is included in the terms of a Fulbright award. This allowance is for the entire round trip. ETAs may use the allowance completely for the trip to Korea, save it all for the return trip home, or divide it between the two. The excess baggage

allowance may be applied to any accompanying baggage or to items sent via international mail or APO. In any case, ETAs will not be entitled to more than the actual cost incurred, up to the \$200 limit; a one-time payment will be made only upon presentation of valid receipts. Therefore, if you plan to use some or part of your baggage allowance at the end of your grant year, you must wait until you have those receipts before you can request reimbursement. Any additional baggage costs over the \$200 limit will come at the ETA's own expense. Hence, it is wise to make full use of the airline's free accompanied baggage. You will receive further instructions during Orientation on how to request this reimbursement. Save your receipts!

Packing

How to Pack

Pack as lightly as possible. Most ETAs find they need less clothing than they expected, and you will accumulate a lot of "stuff" during your year in Korea.

When you arrive at Incheon International Airport, both of your large pieces of luggage will immediately be placed on a truck bound for the Orientation site in Goesan. All of your luggage, as well as your roommate's luggage will be kept in your dormitory room. However, it is **strongly recommended** that you pack everything you need for Orientation in only one of your large pieces of luggage so that you will not need to unpack all of your belongings during the Orientation program.

Things Provided at Orientation

In addition to daily meals and weekly stipend, ETAs will be provided with bedding (one fitted sheet and one lightweight blanket, per Korean style), pillow, Korean language textbook and workbook, name tag, international and domestic calling cards, basic Korea tourist information and map, *ETA Teaching Manual*, and a Fulbright Korea t-shirt.

Bag 1: Orientation

Clothing

"I packed lighter than anyone for Orientation and was never wishing I had brought more. I only brought as much as I could comfortably carry (a backpack of clothes, some music, and a photo album) and washed my clothes once a week. (There are coin-operated washing machines and dryers in the dorms.) You will definitely appreciate not having as much stuff during those few

times in transit when you will need to carry your luggage for medium distances and up flights of stairs.” ~ Former ETA

“Summer campus dress” will be appropriate for the bulk of your time in Goesan, as you will mostly be surrounded by other ETAs and Fulbright staff. One or two pairs of medium-length shorts, a few t-shirts, 1-2 pairs of jeans, a couple of shirts/blouses, one sweater/sweatshirt (if you get cold easily), a rain jacket, tennis shoes, sandals, and a couple of business outfits should suffice. Even though you will be surrounded by other Fulbrighters for a majority of the time, you will also interact with Koreans on campus and in the community, so *be sure that your clothing is representative of your role as a cultural ambassador*. Jungwon University is a private university and holds its employees and students to a very conservative dress code. Short shorts, exposed midriffs, low-cut tops, very low-rise jeans, spaghetti-strap tank tops, and tube tops are unacceptable. If you can’t do a 90-degree bow without flashing someone (from the front or behind), leave it at home! Overly tattered, tight, or provocative clothing should also be left at home.

For two weeks during Orientation, Fulbright will simultaneously be hosting an English immersion camp for Korean students; as part of your training, you will be teaching and interacting with the students. On days when you are teaching or assisting with other camp activities, you are expected to dress the part of a teacher (by conservative, Korean standards). (See the section on “Teaching Clothes” for further clarification on what may or may not be appropriate.)

Throughout Orientation there will be a handful of days (at least 4) when you will be expected to dress in a more professional manner. For men this means dress pants, a collared button-down shirt, tie, and dress shoes. For women this includes dress pants or skirt, blouse, dress shoes, and hosiery. A professional-looking dress may also be acceptable. *No uncovered shoulders, low-cut shirts, or short skirts!* Make sure to pack all the necessary aspects of a professional outfit in your Orientation bag.

At the end of Orientation, you will meet your school officials (Principal/Vice-Principal and Co-teacher). You will also need to be dress professionally for this occasion (for men: slacks, shirt with collar, tie, dress shoes [jacket/suit optional]; for women: slacks/skirt and blouse or dress, hose, dress shoes [jacket/suit optional]). Again, *no uncovered shoulders, low-cut shirts, or short skirts!* We recommend that ladies bring low-heeled pumps or nice flats to wear on this day as you will be standing for long periods of time, walking up and down stairs, and hauling luggage.

You might also visit the DMZ sometime during Orientation and will have to abide by the government-mandated dress code; for this trip, you will need a pair of closed-toe, non-strappy, non-sandal shoes.

You will be arriving at the start of the summer rainy season in Korea, which is hot and very humid. We cannot overstate the importance of bringing a quality, breathable rain jacket (umbrellas can be bought cheaply in Korea) and lightweight clothing that will dry quickly. Though dryers are available at the Orientation site, there are only a few for the entire campus and can sometimes be unreliable. Last year, many ETAs did not dry things completely and instead relied on air drying clothes in their dorm rooms, which meant heavier clothes took a few days to dry. Drying racks can be purchased in the on-campus convenience store.

The Orientation site will have a workout facility, so athletes should bring appropriate clothing. Even though it will be hot, shirts must be worn at all times while exercising, indoors or out. Indoor-only shoes must be worn in the workout facility, so pack a pair of clean tennis shoes if you plan to work out. Jungwon University also has both an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, which will be available for ETA use this summer. However, the pools have a strict dress code of one-piece swimsuits and swim caps. Swim caps are available for purchase in the convenience store.

Other Recommended Items (for Orientation)

You should pack a supply of whatever you consider to be “daily necessities,” enough to last for the duration of the six-week Orientation program. The Orientation site is located in the heart of rural Korea, meaning you will have very limited access to anything beyond standard toiletries.

“Necessities” may include the following:

Laptop computer: There will be an Internet outlet in your dorm room at Jungwon University. Be sure to bring your own Ethernet card software and Ethernet cord (at least 10 feet in length). (See “Computers” for more information.)

External hard drive: If you plan to download and/or share music, TV shows, movies, etc., you might need the extra memory.

Camera: Cameras (and electronics in general) in Korea are priced comparably to the U.S., but it may be difficult to find equipment with English manuals or operating system. It is likely that you will **not** have access to stores that sell electronic equipment until the end of Orientation, so plan accordingly.

Watch: Orientation is run on a very tight schedule, and you will be expected to arrive promptly to all scheduled meetings, events, and activities. The clocks on campus are few and far between, so you will need to make sure you have a reliable way to keep track of your time throughout Orientation (keeping in mind that most of you will also be without a cell phone).

Large bath towel: Towels are not provided during Orientation, so you will need to bring or buy your own. Korean towels are usually about the same size as hand towels in America. You may want to use your large towel at your homestay or for travel throughout the year, however; if you can adapt easily to using a hand towel (as most ETAs do), bring or buy a hand towel and save the luggage space!

Basic toiletries (shampoo, toothpaste, soap, etc.): Try not to waste a lot of space on this stuff; it's heavy, and you can buy a lot of the things you need (except deodorant) pretty much anywhere in Korea. (See "Availability of Everyday Items" for the specific "American" products that are available.)

iPod, mp3 player, etc.: There are plenty of places to buy CDs in Seoul. It is also possible to find reasonably priced portable CD/mp3 players, but again, not necessarily with English manuals.

Books: Although books are heavy and take up a lot of space in your suitcase, it may be a good idea to bring at least a couple. But don't bring too many! You can always trade with other ETAs once you are finished. There is a bookshelf in the Fulbright Building where you can deposit and borrow books; there are also several large bookstores with English selections in Seoul, including Kyobo, Youngpoong Books, and Bandi & Luni's. Additionally, there are at least three used English bookstores in Itaewon, or you can order English books online. English books tend to be more expensive in Korea than in the U.S. (the price is often 20-30% higher).

Miscellaneous: You may also want to bring antibiotics, allergy medicine, sun block, bug spray, Calamine lotion, aspirin or other pain relievers, a Korean phrasebook *with Hangeul*, photos of friends/family, travel/small board games or a deck of cards, and cereal/snack bars (perhaps protein and calcium supplements) if you're worried about adjusting to spicy foods and/or a rice-based diet.

Bag 2: Non-Orientation Items

Teaching Clothes

You will probably be able to get away with bringing just a few outfits that you can mix and match, and recycling them from week to week. The level of formality varies from school to school, but erring on the dressy side is definitely recommended, especially for your first few weeks of teaching. Female teachers typically wear blazers, slacks, dress shirts/blouses, skirts, or dresses, while male teachers usually wear slacks with a shirt and tie. It is important to keep in

mind that Koreans tend to dress more conservatively than Americans. In a professional setting, skirts are rarely worn above the knee, and sleeveless shirts or dresses are not appropriate teaching attire without a cardigan or other top to cover your shoulders. Deep scoop neck shirts may not be appropriate; you must be able to perform a 90-degree bow without letting everyone see down your shirt or revealing cleavage. Tight or revealing clothing of any kind is also not appropriate for teaching. Sandals and open-toe shoes are worn with hosiery (to cover your feet). Some ETAs have found that their school dress codes veered slightly from these standards, but it is best to play it safe and keep these norms in mind if you are shopping for teaching clothes in the States. You will also need to pack for the full spectrum of warm and cold weather, which may require more space than you have in your two suitcases. You might want to pack enough clothes for the first month or so of teaching (hot to mild weather) in your second suitcase and wait to see what kind of winter clothing you want to buy in Korea or have sent to you from the U.S. As a final note, *be very conscious of size differences when it comes to clothing*. Even if you are somewhat average in America (e.g., size 12 for women) it may be difficult for you to find clothes that fit. If you are above average in any way (e.g., height, weight, etc.) consider bringing or shipping more of your own clothes.

Shoes

At many schools, students and faculty wear “slippers” inside. (Usually, these are any kind of slip-on shoes or “slide” sandals.) Many ETAs in previous years have brought Adidas-style sandals or Birkenstocks for this purpose, though basic slippers are readily available (in standard Korean sizes) in Korea. For women – you will probably want some dressy low-heeled slides or flats to wear at school; Adidas-style sandals are typically not nice enough for the fashion aesthetic in Korea. Outside of school, a pair of black dress shoes will suffice for most occasions. Most female ETAs wear flats or sandals when going out (for the sake of comfort), but Korean women do frequently wear high heels. Try to bring shoes that will have good traction in rain and snow, as Korea is an all-weather country. Past ETAs recommend a sturdy pair of boots, possibly UGGs (or equivalent) for the colder months if you have them. Also, keep in mind that Korean culture will require you to slip your shoes on and off several times throughout the day, as shoes are not worn in homes and many restaurants. For this reason, shoes that are easy to put on and take off are ideal in all situations. Similar to clothes, *you must be aware of size differences if you are thinking about buying shoes in Korea*. Korean shoe sizes are based on millimeters, so first you will have to figure out the right conversion. For women, you will have a hard time finding shoes bigger than a U.S. size 8 (250 in Korea); men’s sizes typically go up to a U.S. size 10.5 (285). Koreans tend to have more narrow feet, so those with wide feet may also have difficulty finding shoes. There are larger sizes available in specialty stores that cater to foreigners (most of

which are in Itaewon), but these stores tend to be more pricy and may have a very limited selection.

Suggested Teaching Materials

Former ETAs recommend bringing a few items that can be used in the classroom. While many ETAs prefer to teach with online or digital materials, there are some ETAs who do not have access to technology in the classroom. Therefore, it is suggested to bring or ship some of the following items:

- Magazines, especially those featuring popular singers or movie stars (magazines are expensive in Korea and not available in English, so consider bringing some from home)
- Sample U.S. currency or play money (for money/shopping lessons - note that Korean banks won't have American coins, so if you want to do a money lesson with coins, you will need to bring them with you)
- American stickers, especially those with English phrases on them (great for reward systems!!)
- Postcards of your hometown/city (also good for prizes)
- Newspapers, grocery store advertisements, coupons, etc. Photos of your family, friends, and hometown
- A video of your hometown and/or university campus
- U.S. maps (so you can show your students where you live)
- American menus (for food lessons)
- Bus or train schedules (for transportation lessons)
- Pop songs to teach your students (CDs, mp3 files, etc.)
- Music videos, commercials, TV shows (popular shows: *America's Funniest Home Videos*, *CSI*, *Friends*, *Gilmore Girls*, *Gossip Girl*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Heroes*, *House*, *Lost*, *NCIS*, *One Tree Hill*, *Prison Break*, *The Simpsons*, *24*, *SpongeBob SquarePants*, *Tom & Jerry*, and various *Disney Channel* shows)
- Cultural holiday stuff (e.g., videos of *The Grinch*, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, or *It's The Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown!*; CDs with holiday music; Valentine's Day cards; St. Patrick's Day shamrocks; plastic Easter Eggs; Halloween Jack-O-Lanterns; etc.)
- Paraphernalia for other American events (e.g., "March Madness" basketball, the Superbowl, Black History Month, elections, etc.)

NOTE: Although certain materials (stickers, candy, etc.) will be useful regardless, you may want to wait until you start teaching to gauge your students' abilities and interests before bringing/sending a lot of materials to Korea. Also, it is best **not** to bring a lot of ESL-related books to Korea, as there is a good selection at bookstores in Seoul, and it will be difficult to

predict what will be useful before you actually start teaching. You will also be given a Fulbright teaching manual to help you with lesson planning. (Please see the “Teaching” section for further information.)

Gifts for School and Homestay Family

Gift-giving is very important in Korean culture. You will create a very positive first impression if you bring gifts for your school (Principal, Vice-Principal, and Co-teacher) and homestay family. (You run the risk of creating a very negative first impression if you do not participate in this aspect of Korean culture.) The gifts can be simple and preferably should be objects that aren't readily available in Korea.

It is not necessary to bring a gift for each individual member of your homestay family, as you won't know the details of your family composition until the very end of Orientation. Rather, you should bring something that can be shared by all (e.g., food or a board game). It is not the amount of money you spend on the gifts, but rather the gesture and thought that really counts; however, keep in mind that you'll be living with these people in their home for nearly a year when you are shopping for gifts. If you are not able to procure all of your gifts in America, nice tea/coffee sets, ties/scarves, or alcohol can be purchased from Korean department stores upon arrival.

Past ETAs compiled this list of gift suggestions:

- Famous products from your state/hometown
- Chocolates/candies, sweet wines, mixed nuts
- Calendars or postcards of your state/hometown
- Pens or typical souvenir-type things from your hometown
- Souvenirs (t-shirts, caps, etc.) from sports teams or your university (especially if your university is famous in Korea—e.g., Harvard, Stanford, Yale, etc.)
- American games (e.g., Jenga, Monopoly, and Uno, etc.; these are very popular with homestay siblings, and you can always use them for club classes if there are no children in your homestay)
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Perfume, after-shave, and duty-free liquor are considered very nice gifts
- Anything name brand (e.g., Abercrombie, Adidas, Burberry, Coach, Lacoste, Louis Vuitton, Nike, Polo, Puma, etc.)
- Small packs of nice coffee grounds, instant coffee, or a French press (be aware that most Koreans typically drink instant coffee and may not have a coffee maker)

- Vitamins and other well-being goods (they are expensive in Korea)

Final note on gifts: wrapping and presentation is just as important, perhaps even more important, than the gift itself. You can pack gifts for your homestay and school in your “second bag”, purchase wrapping paper or gift bags in Korea, and give the gifts during your first week at your placement. It’s not necessary to give the gifts the moment you arrive.

Past ETAs’ Thoughts on Packing

What are you glad you did bring?

- Laptop computer (You’ll have a computer at school, but everything is in Korean.)
- External hard drive (One external hard drive with movies, TV shows, music, digital pictures, e-books, printable lesson materials, etc. takes up a lot less space than all the CDs, DVDs, photos, and books you’d otherwise need to bring!)
- Flash drive/USB drive (for smaller files)
- Warrantees/manuals for computer, digital camera, hard drive, etc.
- Converter cables for Apple products
- Converters/plug adapters
- Enough money to use during Orientation (The weekly stipend from Fulbright was not enough for past ETAs who shopped, went out a lot, or traveled on the free weekend(s) of Orientation.)
- A variety of money formats (e.g., traveler’s checks, cash, emergency credit cards; can be especially helpful if you are planning to travel to Southeast Asia or other nearby countries during your winter break)
- An extra set of passport-size photos
- Flexibly-sized clothing for weight fluctuations
- A year’s supply of underwear (Delicates will get stretched out in Korean washing machines!)
- For women: Lots of bras, especially in nude or neutral colors (almost all Korean bras are padded and typically only available up to a B cup)
- Shoes (sizes over 8W or 10.5M are difficult to come by in Korea, especially if you have wide feet)
- Slippers/sandals for school and bathroom use, boots and sneakers (if above size 10M)
- Hiking gear
- A large bath towel (hard to find in Korea)
- Products for curly hair
- Q-tips (the Korean kind tend to be harder than the American kind)
- Stomachache medications, Midol, NyQuil, cipro, fiber supplements

- Shout! wipes/Tide-to-Go pens (or other stain removers)
- American toothpaste (some ETAs find that Korean toothpaste doesn't clean as well)
- Hand sanitizer
- Pillow/travel-size pillow (some ETAs find Korean "bean" pillows uncomfortable)
- American holiday cards (Christmas cards are available in Korea, but other holiday cards are scarce)
- Stove top cooking recipes to share foods with Korean homestay and friends (ovens are rare in Korean homes; stick to no-bake recipes)
- Costco card (There are branches in a few major cities, which carry many of the same products as Costco in the U.S – lots of "American" foods are impossible to find anywhere else. They accept U.S. membership cards.)
- Playing cards

What did you need but didn't bring?

- Original programming discs for reinstalling computer programs (Windows software, etc.)
- For anyone applying to grad school: Official copies of transcripts, letters of recommendations, etc. (It's much easier to ask for these before you leave and bring them along. Your first few months in Korea will be hectic enough as it is.)
- Deodorant (very hard to find and expensive – definitely bring a year's supply!)
- Floss (what you find in Korea is expensive and not necessarily the best quality)
- Supply of basic American medications/pills (e.g., painkillers, antacids, sleeping pills, antihistamines, allergy pills, yeast infection creams, etc.)
- Vitamins/calcium tablets (Dairy products are not a large part of the typical Korean diet.)
- For girls: Larger-absorbency tampons (pads and regular-absorbency tampons are common)
- Insect repellent and plenty of sunscreen
- Board games (e.g., Apples to Apples Jr., Boggle, Guess Who, Pictionary, Scrabble, Taboo, Twister, etc.)
- American junk food (e.g., beef jerky, Cheetos, Double Stuffed Oreos, gummy bears, Mac 'n Cheese, pretzels, popcorn, etc.)
- GUM!!! (for avid gum chewers, Korean gum may be wildly disappointing)

What did you bring but could have just bought in Korea?

- Cardigans (easy to find in Korea – can take on/off easily between the cold hallways/warm classrooms; necessary for covering your shoulders if you have sleeveless dresses/shirts)
- Too many toiletries (many of the same brands are available in Korea)

- For women with small feet: Too many pairs of shoes (very readily available and cheap up to size 8)
- Too many clothes (You really will wear the same things over and over!)
- Too many pairs of pantyhose/socks (available/cheap in Korea, unless you are heavy set or taller than 5'8")
- Nail polish and makeup (very popular and abundant in Korea, but keep in mind that the selection will be limited to Asian skin tones)
- Batteries (very inexpensive and abundant in Korea)
- Stationery supplies (Korea is a country of stationery-lovers, although most of it is covered with cutesy cartoons and funny English phrases.)
- Birth control (various kinds are available cheaply over the counter in Korea – however, if you need a certain kind, you may want to bring your own)

What did you bring that you didn't need?

- Inappropriate clothing: low-rise jeans (Koreans sit on the floor often), low-cut shirts (not conducive to bowing), etc.
- Phone cards (inexpensive in Korea, and it is easier to use Skype or other Internet calling services)
- Too many teaching materials! (you can find most things you will want/use in Korea)

Availability of Everyday Items

These days, American products are easy to find in Korea. If you go to a large city, such as Seoul, Busan, Daegu, Daejeon, or Gwangju, you will be able to find most of the things you need. Seoul, in particular, has a large array of imported goods from America, Europe, and Japan. At some markets, you can find American products that are difficult to find in other parts of Korea, including common Western brands of food and toiletries. Most department stores will also have a foreign food section in the grocery department. Like most imports, the prices of these goods tend to be higher than U.S. prices. There are also seven Costco Wholesale stores in Korea with items similar to what they carry at the Costco stores in America, though more expensive (locations can be found on the Costco website: www.costco.co.kr/eng).

If you are picky about particular personal hygiene products and brands (razors, face wash, etc.), bring your own.

The following is a list of brands that are easy to find just about anywhere in Korea:

- Herbal Essences (shampoo/conditioner)
- Head and Shoulders (shampoo/conditioner)
- Pantene Pro-V (shampoo/conditioner)
- Sunsilk (shampoo/conditioner, very similar to “Thermasilk”)
- Dove (body wash, soap, face wash, shampoo/conditioner)
- Clean & Clear (face wash, toner)
- Neutrogena (face wash)
- Close-Up (toothpaste)
- Oral-B (toothbrushes)
- Renu (contact lens solution)
- Johnson & Johnson (baby powder, lotion, etc)
- Nivea (body lotion)
- Kotex (variety of sizes, styles)
- Tampax (regular absorbency; super absorbency is hard to find)

Used Items for Sale at Orientation

The OCs will collect a number of used items in good condition from the outgoing 2010 ETAs to sell, on a first come, first serve basis, to the incoming 2011 ETAs at the beginning of Orientation. While an exact list of what will be available has not been compiled yet, last year’s sale included a limited number of the following items:

- Backpacks/book bags
- Hairdryers/curling irons
- Phrasebooks/dictionaries
- Clothing hangers
- Full-size towels
- Hairdryers/curling irons
- Phrasebooks/dictionaries
- Travel guides (Korea and surrounding countries)
- Umbrellas

The funds collected from the sale of available items will be used to fund special Orientation programs. (See the “Shopping” section below for additional information about product availability in Korea.)

Arrival in Korea

ETAs will arrive at Incheon International Airport (west of Seoul) on July 3rd. After passing through baggage claim and customs, ETAs will be met at the airport by OCs and other Fulbright staff members. ETAs will then board buses bound for Jungwon University in Goesan, where they will reside for the Orientation period.

Immigration

Entry for American citizens into Korea is straightforward. Upon arrival, everyone must go through immigration, where they will show their passport and an arrival card (distributed on the plane). On the arrival card, for “Occupation” write “GRANTEE,” and for “Purpose of Visit” write “FULBRIGHT.” While these are not normally critical entry inspections, **do not** write “TEACHING” in either of these categories, as you may get held up in customs. Fulbright recommends using the KAEC office as the “Address in Korea” when completing the arrival card, so don’t forget to keep the address handy (see Appendix B).

Even those without a visa should experience no difficulties in passing through immigration. American citizens without a visa are given 30-day permit stamps upon arrival. Notify Fulbright immediately if you arrive in Korea without an A-3 Fulbright Visa.

Baggage Claim

After passing through immigration, go directly to baggage claim and then through customs. Baggage carts are available free of charge. Should your baggage not arrive with your flight, you will most likely be notified by baggage service employees who will ask for information about where your baggage should be delivered. If this occurs, please find and notify one of the Fulbright staff members who will be waiting for you at the airport, they will help you fill out a lost luggage form. Your luggage will then be delivered to you at Jungwon University when it arrives. It might be useful to keep a basic set of clothes (e.g., underwear, shirt, socks), medications, and small toiletries in your carry-on bag as a precaution.

Customs

You should have no problems clearing customs. You’re likely to be waved right through; however, Korea will occasionally exercise more stringent customs procedures. Although the “Green Channel” (no goods to declare) and “Red Channel” (goods to declare) system is in use, you may be asked to open your bags and do a “show and tell” regardless of the channel you use. (Use the Green Channel!) Take the request in stride, and be nice even if you find the request to

be rather annoying. As in so many other situations, a pleasant response will be more advantageous in the long run.

Most Fulbright grantees are able to use the Green Channel, as they have nothing special to declare. Ordinary personal effects brought with you are not subject to duty, provided you have what could reasonably be defined as “normal” quantities. Don’t spend too much time worrying about customs. Most of you will breeze right through without having to open your bags.

ETA Lifestyle

The main components of the Fulbright ETA Program in Korea include the six-week summer Orientation, the teaching assistantship, the homestay experience, and other opportunities for learning about Korean culture.

Summer Orientation

The 2011-2012 ETA Orientation will take place from July 3 to August 18 at Jungwon University (JWU) located in the town of Goesan. Goesan, a rural country town, is an area known for its fresh air and its beautiful landscape. ETAs will live in same-sex double rooms in a dormitory on the JWU campus and will have meals at one of the university cafeterias. ETAs will also have access to university laundry facilities, the campus convenience store, and the fitness center.

You should prepare yourself to live with a roommate in close quarters with about eighty other ETAs. For many, Orientation is the first time in several years to live in this kind of communal atmosphere. In addition to adjusting to cultural changes, ETAs will also need to adjust to this style of living.

Orientation dorm rooms are outfitted with a bed, desk, chair, and upright wardrobe for each ETA. There is also a phone for making and receiving on-campus calls. Most ETAs will not acquire cellular phones until after the Orientation period is complete when they begin teaching at their respective schools. However, an international phone card will be provided to ETAs at the start of Orientation. (For more information on staying in touch while in Korea, please see the “Communication” section on p. 48.) Each dormitory room has a private bathroom. All Orientation classrooms and dormitories are air conditioned.

The Orientation program prepares ETAs for the challenges of living and working in Korea, allows them to adjust to Korean culture and lifestyle in a comfortable setting, and gives them an opportunity to develop friendships and support networks with one another. Major components of Orientation include intensive Korean language instruction, teacher training and practice, and cultural exposure. Mandatory language classes meet Monday through Friday for four hours in the morning, while training seminars, teaching practice (for two weeks during Camp Fulbright--the Fulbright English camp for Korean students), cultural workshops, and other extracurricular activities are scheduled for the afternoons and evenings.

ETAs must learn *Hangeul*, the Korean alphabet, prior to arrival at Orientation. Online links for doing so are available in Appendix D. There will be a Korean language placement exam on the second day of Orientation. ETAs who do not have a basic mastery of the Korean alphabet will be at risk of falling drastically behind in Korean language class from the very beginning. Conversely, ETAs who have prior knowledge of the Korean language should not expect to “coast” through Orientation, as classes will be divided by level to ensure that all ETAs receive instruction appropriate for their individual ability level.

The typical ETA day will last from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., not including homework, studying, meals, and other optional extracurricular activities that will be available for ETAs to enroll in. The majority of weekends will also contain mandatory programming, so ETAs should not expect to have time to visit friends and relatives during the six-week Orientation program.

At the beginning of Orientation, the OCs will provide detailed program expectations and guidelines in a document known as the “Orientation Agreement,” which all ETAs will be expected to sign and uphold. Successful completion of all Orientation program components—language classes, teacher training, and cultural preparation—is a requirement for placement at a Korean host school. ETAs who do not successfully complete all aspects of the Orientation program will be required to return to the U.S. at their own expense.

Placements

During the second week of the Orientation program, ETAs will have an opportunity to complete a placement preference form, detailing their desires about geographic location and school type. In reality, though, ETAs end up having very little say in their exact placement; a variety of additional factors, such as placement availability, school requests, provincial budgets, and Fulbright needs, are also considered carefully by Fulbright staff before making placement

decisions. It is anticipated that many 2011 ETAs will be placed in rural areas. ETAs will be informed of their placement school and location at the beginning of August, and they will receive their homestay assignment during the very last week of Orientation.

Teaching

The ETA Role

The Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship is primarily a teaching position. The term ETA is somewhat misleading since, in almost all cases, ETAs serve as the primary teacher in the classroom and will have to lesson plan, prepare for, and manage their own classes accordingly. The ETA role is to teach conversational English (i.e., everyday English with an emphasis on speaking) to Korean students. Although Korean students study English starting in elementary school or earlier, most do not have a grasp on the basic conversational use of the language. Their Korean English teachers usually speak Korean in class while teaching grammar, vocabulary, writing, etc. from a textbook. In recent years, English education in Korea has placed greater emphasis on speaking and listening. This is why, as English conversation teachers, ETAs are valuable assets to their host schools.

The ETA contract states that ETAs are not obligated to teach more than 20 class hours per week. Most ETAs teach the full 20 hours, but the exact number of class hours varies by school. ETAs may teach more hours on a voluntary basis, but they **may not** receive extra compensation from the school or other outside parties.

Although ETAs teach a maximum of 20 class hours per week, they are usually at school for at least 30-40 hours per week, sometimes more. Many schools require that ETAs be present for the duration of the school day, even if they are done teaching. Since class hours are not always consecutively scheduled, ETAs often have free time between classes. ETAs use the free time at school to plan lessons, study Korean language, socialize with students, and work or chat with other teachers in the teachers' room (*gyomushil*). These non-teaching hours can be very valuable if they are spent forging better relations with the school. Please do not come to Korea with the expectation of spending less than 30-40 hours/week at school.

In Korean schools, it is very common for last-minute schedule changes to occur with no prior notice. This is sometimes due to a lack of communication between other teachers and the ETA or the language barrier. It can be frustrating, but unfortunately there is very little ETAs can do to change this, beyond remaining flexible and having back-up lesson plans prepared. ETAs can try

to resolve scheduling frustrations by regularly asking their co-teachers if they are aware of any upcoming schedule changes, but it is important to keep in mind that even Korean teachers are subject to last-minute changes in the school's scheduling system. Common schedule changes may include switching classes and/or class time, classes being cancelled, and classes being added to make up for a missed day.

Classes typically contain 30-45 students, which means ETAs teaching 15-20 different class sections can expect to have 500-900 students. ETAs usually teach each class once a week, which means teaching the same lesson many times throughout the week. While some ETAs may be asked by their school to teach from a textbook, most are responsible for creating their own lessons and are given a considerable amount of freedom with regard to curriculum and content. ETAs may draw from their own personal creativity or previous teaching background to create lesson plans. Fulbright provides each ETA with the *Fulbright ETA Teaching Manual*, which contains teaching tips, sample lesson plans created by previous ETAs, and links to a variety of online resources. ETAs also have access to ETAB, an online forum for ETA discussions and sharing of lesson plans.

In addition to teaching regular classes, ETAs often teach extracurricular English club classes and English workshops for teachers. These are great opportunities for ETAs to get to know their students and colleagues better. Due to smaller class sizes, they are also ideal for experimenting with more creative and interactive lesson plans.

Although the schedule may seem daunting, it is important to remember that teaching is the primary purpose of the ETA Program. For most ETAs, it is also the most rewarding and exciting aspect of their grant year.

Winter Break Program

Winter vacation typically lasts from the end of December to the end of February, although it varies by school and region. During this period, most ETAs take time to travel around Asia or to the U.S., conduct independent research, take Korean language classes, or arrange an internship in Seoul. ETAs are also required by contract to teach a special English class or winter English Camp at their school during winter vacation if their school wants one to be held. The nature and scheduling of the winter break class varies by school. Fulbright has set the following guidelines for the schools and ETAs for scheduling and designing the winter break program: The class may not begin before January 1st, and the dates must be mutually agreed upon by the ETA and the school administration. The school must notify the ETA and provide KAEC with a detailed plan

for the special program (dates, number of students, hours per day, level, etc.) by October 30, 2011 (this deadline is subject to change). The program cannot exceed 10 days of actual class time nor can it exceed four teaching hours per day. Class size is limited to 20 students or fewer.

The winter break English classes are similar to club classes in content and style. Most schools allow the ETA to create their own lesson plans and agenda for the program, allowing for more inventive and fun classes. Past ETAs have taught lessons on “American” cooking, pop music and movies, or creative writing and drama projects. Many times, the students in these types of winter classes have more advanced English skills or a greater motivation to study English, making debates, discussions, and student-led activities more possible.

The Korean Educational System

Confucianism has greatly shaped Korean culture. ETAs experience this directly when working in the Korean school system. Korea has a highly competitive educational system that places great emphasis on admission to a good university. Admission to less prestigious schools is relatively easier, but the pressure to attend a top-ranked school continues to greatly affect Korean adolescent life. The university that a student is accepted to and attends is of much greater importance than how the student actually performs at the university level and is also thought to indicate (and influence) the student’s job prospects. As a result, there is an enormous amount of pressure on high school students. Much of the educational system is focused on preparation for highly competitive university entrance exams, the most important one being the national KSAT exam (수능) held every year in mid-November.

Students spend six years in elementary school, three intense years in both middle and high school preparing for rigorous entrance exams, and four years of comparative freedom in university. The educational system used to be highly centralized, with the Ministry of Education approving all budgets and texts. In 2008, the government announced a deregulation of schools, and provincial boards of education are now responsible for setting guidelines for schools in their areas. Many students also supplement their normal school education by attending private institutions (*hagwons*) outside of regular school hours, often in the evenings and on weekends.

The Schools

The Korean educational system is infamous for long hours and hard work. Many Korean secondary schools are segregated by gender, but some are co-educational. Most elementary schools are co-ed. There is a variety of public, private, special interest, commercial, and religious schools in Korea. Subject-oriented schools include foreign language, science, and art schools and

are usually limited to high school students. Commercial, technical, and farming schools are available for students planning to enter the job market immediately after high school instead of attending a four-year college. Due to the varying nature of Korean schools, it is important for ETAs to tailor their teaching styles according to their school's environment and students.

Some ETAs teach in regular classrooms while others teach in language labs. Most classrooms are equipped with computers, Internet access and TV monitors or projectors/screens. Other equipment that is often available includes overhead projectors and tape recorders.

The Students

Elementary school students do not wear uniforms, but Korean middle and high school students wear uniforms and keep their hair cut to a specified length and style. Like all young people, Korean students display a great range of behavior, from painfully shy to painfully wild. Some ETAs have said that they felt like they were “pulling teeth” to get their students to respond. Others have witnessed unexpected behavior, such as:

- Two students cutting each other's hair.
- Students roughhousing, putting each other in headlocks and/or hitting (male and female)
- Students talking on cell phones or sending text messages.
- Students (male or female) sitting in each other's laps and holding hands.
- Students knitting or doing needlepoint (male and female).
- Students popping each other's pimples.
- Students farting on each other.
- Students crying in class.
- Students sleeping during class (common in high schools).

These are not necessarily everyday experiences, but they are not unheard of. Students tend to be rowdier in ETA classes than in their other classes. After all, ETAs are generally younger and perceived as more “fun” than their Korean counterparts. To some Korean students, “ETA” stands for “Entertaining Teachers from America.”

Although this may seem alarming, ETAs receive basic teacher training at Orientation, which includes classroom management strategies. ETAs also able to share effective classroom management methods with each other during Orientation, at conference workshops, and via email discussions throughout the year. The best way for an ETA to control his/her classroom is to develop a system of discipline/consequences and/or rewards in advance. It is better to be strict from the first day and loosen up later, rather than try to regain authority after a period of laxity.

Corporal punishment is legal, with restrictions, in Korea. In general, urban and progressive schools are less likely to use physical punishment than more rural schools. Many teachers carry sticks to class for intimidation but will occasionally use them for actual physical discipline. While every school is different, it is important for an ETA to be aware and anticipate the possibility of being exposed to various types of corporal punishment. ETAs are cultural ambassadors and subject to U.S. laws. Therefore, they should not engage in corporal punishment.

Students' abilities vary greatly within the same class. Unlike the American school system, Korean classes are usually not divided on the basis of ability. Learning disabilities are often overlooked or not recognized in Korean schools and within society. Schools rarely provide extra support for such cases, and special education for students with extra needs is rare, especially in elementary and middle schools.

The Schedule

The school year is approximately 220 days (32 weeks), beginning in March, not September. This may cause some confusion, since ETAs enter schools mid-year in late August. There are two major vacations (summer and winter) and a number of shorter holidays and vacations throughout the year (see Appendix C). ETAs may receive additional time off during examination periods, but individual schools will decide on a case-by-case basis whether or not to grant this. Schools inform ETAs of their days off but usually not far in advance.

The typical Korean school week is Monday through Friday, with a half-day on Saturday two weeks out of the month. ETAs are not required to teach on Saturdays. School hours are typically 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for elementary school, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for middle school, and 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for high school. However, most Korean high school students study under teacher supervision at school until 10:00 p.m. or later everyday. Korean teachers generally arrive at school around 8:00 a.m. or earlier and leave around 5:00 p.m. or later, depending on when the vice principal leaves or otherwise gives the teachers permission to leave. While some ETAs are allowed to leave early when their teaching duties are finished, many schools require ETAs to stay for the duration of the school day. An ETA's departure time is greatly dependent on the principal's preferences. While Fulbright encourages schools to permit ETAs to leave when their teaching duties are finished so they can participate in cultural or other activities during their time in Korea, it is ultimately the school's prerogative to decide whether or not to allow this, and ETAs should be aware of this point.

The daily school schedule varies from elementary to high school. A typical high school senior's weekly subject distribution is 6 hours each of Korean and math, 4 hours of English, 2 hours each of physics and chemistry, and various electives including foreign languages, Chinese characters, music, art, history, computer programming, biology, earth science, and physical education. Students remain in the same classroom with the same students for the majority of their classes, and it is the teachers that move among classrooms. Certain classes such as chemistry or biology labs and computer programming are typically held in a different classroom.

The Co-Teacher

ETAs are assigned a primary co-teacher who is responsible for looking after the ETAs' needs. The co-teacher is usually another English teacher at the school, and he or she acts as an intermediary between the ETA and the school. While some ETAs have reported co-teachers who were not very helpful, others have had co-teachers who became their closest friend and ally at school. Some ETAs teach their classes with a co-teacher (another Korean English teacher, not necessarily the ETA's primary co-teacher), but most do not. Most ETAs prefer to teach alone in class after the first few weeks. Many schools do, however, require that a Korean English teacher be present in the classroom while the ETA is teaching in order to monitor students, aid in classroom management, and occasionally step in to translate difficult phrases or instructions.

School Relations

It is very important for ETAs to maintain good relations with their co-teachers, principals, vice principals, and other teachers at their school. Not only does it make daily school life easier, it also sets a good precedent for future ETAs to follow. ETAs typically have a desk in the *gyomushil* (teachers' office) along with other teachers. One of the easiest ways to make a good impression in the *gyomushil* is to remember to give *insa* (greeting). When seeing teachers, principals, or administrators at the beginning of the day, bow and say "*Annyeong hashimnikka?*" (Hello, how are you?). This takes little effort and will greatly impress Korean colleagues. Other teachers may not always give *insa* first since ETAs are generally younger and thus expected to initiate *insa*.

Sometimes, it may seem difficult to be friendly with teachers or administrators because they may seem aloof or anti-social towards the ETA. But it is important to keep in mind that the language barrier is just as intimidating for them as it is for the ETA. Often, ETAs will find at the end of the year that a teacher who seemed rude or anti-social was simply too shy to speak to the native English teacher. Korean adults can be as shy as Korean teenagers when speaking English, so ETAs often have to initiate conversation.

ETAs should think about what they want to get out of their experience in Korea, whether their focus is solely on teaching and school duties or a combination of outside personal interests in addition to teaching. Whether one chooses to play an active or a more passive role at school, it is still important to maintain good school relations. There will inevitably be bumps along the way, but maintaining open communication and continually working toward an atmosphere of mutual respect is important for making the most of the ETA experience.

The Homestay

Living with a homestay is a requirement of the ETA program and an important aspect of immersion into Korean culture and lifestyle. The homestay experience makes the ETA experience markedly different from that of someone who simply teaches in a private Korean language institute. The schools individually make homestay arrangements after ETAs receive their placement assignments. Thus, ETAs have little to no control over who they will live with. Most ETAs are placed in the home of a student or teacher at their school or another acquaintance of the school. Each ETA's homestay experience is vastly different, but we have done our best to summarize the experience as accurately as possible.

What happens when a young American is placed in the home of a stranger for a year in a foreign culture? Some days are wonderful; others are not. This is not so different from life in an American family, with its everyday ups-and-downs. Living with a host family in a foreign culture for a year can be difficult for both the ETA and the host family. Cultural misunderstandings may lead to uncomfortable situations. But when ETAs make an effort to immerse themselves in their new family's life and enjoy themselves, much more is gained from the experience. Through their homestays, ETAs observe and participate in the central unit of Korean culture: the family.

A typical Korean family consists of a working father, a stay-at-home or working mother, and children. These days, more Korean households have two working parents. Some families include grandparents, in-laws, or other relatives. Although traditional Korean values emphasize respect for one's elders, many Korean households seem to revolve around their youngest members: the children. While children are on the lowest rung of the "Confucian totem pole," to their parents, they are the most important family members, since they will carry on the family line. Thus, do not be surprised if your host parents go out of their way to accommodate their children's wishes, which can sometimes dictate what you will eat for dinner or where the whole family goes on weekend outings.

In many homestays, ETAs are treated as sons and daughters and often experience the benefits of living with a Korean *ajumma* (wife/mother). After living the single college life away from home, many ETAs are surprised (and often delighted) to find three meals a day waiting for them on the table and neatly folded laundry on their dressers. But many ETAs also experience the negative side of being regarded as honorary offspring: being treated like children. In Korea, people often are not considered adults until they are married. As a result of the younger age of ETAs, their inability to speak Korean, and their lack of familiarity with Korean culture, host families often treat ETAs in an over-protective manner. This is often difficult for ETAs to adapt to, since most have been independent of their own families for at least a few years; however, the protectiveness of host families should be interpreted as an expression of the care and concern they have for ETAs.

Living in a homestay may be difficult for ETAs, but it puts even more pressure on host families. There are a number of reasons why Korean families would choose to accept this pressure and the responsibility of hosting ETAs. Many families are eager to teach foreigners about Korea, while they, themselves, learn about America. Some have children who were hosted in another country, and they want to return the courtesy. But most families use this as an opportunity to learn or perfect their English. In the past, ETAs were required to tutor members of their host families in exchange for free room and board, but now the schools offer financial compensation to homestay families for hosting the ETA. The ETA is not required to tutor anyone in the homestay family, and the homestay family is not supposed to ask the ETA to do so. Keep in mind, however, that one or two hours a week of voluntary tutoring might go a long way in creating a good relationship with your homestay.

It is important to build a good relationship with host families from the beginning. ETAs should bring gifts from America for host families (see suggestions in the “What to Pack” section). In order to maintain a positive relationship, it is recommended that ETAs give their homestay families gifts every so often (e.g., sharable food items such as a cake or some bread from a local bakery or souvenirs from travels abroad) in order to foster good relations. Furthermore, in the first few months, it is important not to travel away from home every weekend. Most families only have time to spend with each other on the weekends, and if the ETA is always away, it will be difficult to build a relationship and may cause some resentment on the host family’s part. ETAs should have basic consideration for the rules of the family and should be aware that they may even have a curfew. Be sure to call home if you’re coming back at a late hour or missing a family dinner.

Another important cultural difference in the homestay is the relative lack of personal space and privacy compared to American standards. Most Korean homes are quite small. Having a room to oneself is a relatively modern concept in Korean history. Traditionally, there were no dividing lines within the household. Only one wall outside the house separated the family from the world, and all family members slept together in one room. Although ETAs are required by contract to have their own private room, many families have an “open door” policy and will enter the room without knocking. In Korean culture, this is not considered rude, as ETAs are included as part of the household. In fact, it is often an indication that the family feels open and close to the ETA. Should ETAs find this disconcerting, they are advised to lock doors when dressing; however, it is a good policy to leave doors open while relaxing at home, as an invitation to the host family to visit.

Another important thing to remember is that host families have lives outside of their interactions with ETAs. It is easy to develop an “egotistical” attitude while in Korea because foreign visitors (especially English teachers) receive a lot of attention and special treatment. But host families have their own personal lives, including problems at work, financial difficulties, and family relationship issues that may not be related to ETAs. Some of these problems might not be communicated due to language barriers, but most personal problems would not be shared regardless of language. There may be times when ETAs feel they have done something wrong because the host family members seem angry or upset, but it may not be related to the ETA at all. ETAs should try to be sensitive to family dynamics and atmosphere, and remember that the world – and even Korea – does not revolve around them.

Should a problem arise in the homestay, whether it’s a personal, family, or logistical concern, Fulbright encourages ETAs to bring it to the attention of their schools. If a homestay change is necessary, the school is responsible for finding the ETA a new homestay, and Fulbright will offer needed support. ETAs should keep Fulbright apprised of any homestay changes by contacting the ETA Program Coordinator.

Changing host families is not uncommon and should not be viewed negatively. ETAs might change host families during the year for a variety of reasons. One ETA commented, “Living with two families this year has been a more eye-opening experience for me. If I had only lived with one family this year, I would think that that one family is what all Korean families are like.”

Korean Language

The Korean language is considered a member of the Altaic family, which includes languages such as Manchurian and Mongolian. Korean is structurally very similar to Japanese even though the connections between these two languages are not clearly established. Although Korean and Chinese are not related languages, about fifty percent of the Korean vocabulary is borrowed from Chinese. Up until the late 19th century, most educated Koreans wrote primarily in Chinese characters (Chinese is to Korean what Latin is to European languages). Today everyone writes in Korean, but Chinese characters (*Hanja*) are still used to some extent. Most newspapers, academic books and official messages are written in the Korean alphabet with a sprinkling of Chinese characters. Generally, personal names and titles are still written in Chinese characters for official or formal occasions. Increasingly, Chinese characters seem to be giving way to “pure” *Hangeul* (i.e., with no mixture of Chinese characters) as the preferred writing system.

The Korean alphabet, which is known as *Hangeul*, was developed in the mid-15th century. It is comprised of 10 simple vowels and 14 consonants. Koreans point proudly to the fact that *Hangeul* was voted the most scientific alphabet in the world by the 1957 UNESCO conference held in New Delhi. It is very simple to learn and can be mastered in a few days.

Knowledge of the Korean language prior to being awarded the Fulbright Grant is not a requirement of the ETA program; however, **knowledge of *Hangeul* is expected of all ETAs upon arrival in Korea.** *Hangeul* can be learned on the Internet or by making flashcards (see Appendix D for links). ETAs should be comfortable reading and writing at least the basic consonants and vowels by the time Orientation starts.

The language barrier is one of the greatest challenges for the ETAs in Korea; however, ETAs do not need to be fluent in Korean to have meaningful experiences. ETAs without previous knowledge of Korean leave Orientation knowing basic greetings, everyday expressions, and verb conjugations. Learning even this much will go a long way in forging good relations with school administrations, students, and homestay families.

Independent Study

ETAs are not required to conduct formal research, and the intense teaching schedule makes doing so difficult; however, ETAs have a variety of opportunities to learn about Korea through daily experience. Many ETAs have done informal research projects that incorporated their day-

to-day lives as teachers and homestay participants. Other projects have involved the extracurricular activities that ETAs pursue outside of work hours. Examples of independent ETA research and activities include the following:

- English drama, video, or newspaper club activities
- ETA winter drama camp
- Community service volunteer work (orphanage, “free *hagwon*,” women’s center)
- Korean martial arts (*taekwondo*, *hapkido*, *geomdo*, *taekkyun*)
- Korean traditional performing arts (theatre, drumming, instruments, dance, etc.)
- Calligraphy (Chinese or Korean characters)
- Mountain climbing (popular weekend pastime)
- Study of Korean folklore and literature
- Study of Korean language
- Survey of students to study views of gender roles among Korean teenagers
- Non-Korea-specific activities such as yoga, hip-hop dance class, piano, tennis, etc.

These types of projects are feasible, and Fulbright strongly encourages such pursuits in order to provide a more well-rounded experience in Korea. ETAs should try to establish a few non-teaching goals at the beginning of the year for completion throughout the year or during the two-month winter break.

Living in Korea

Safety

Korea is a relatively safe country, and ETAs rarely feel any threat to their personal safety. The most common accidents are auto-related. All front-seat passengers are required by law to wear seatbelts. Often, there are no seatbelts in backseats, but ETAs should try to wear a seatbelt at all times if one is available.

Incidents of muggings, rapes, and other crimes involving personal assault are publicized in the newspaper. Even though these problems have increased in recent years, Korea is very safe compared to American cities. All the same, it is best not to wander alone late at night, particularly if you are a woman. ETAs should be particularly careful in nightlife districts where one might encounter someone who is drunk and more aggressive than usual. Just use common sense.

While violent crime is rare, theft and pick pocketing are slightly more common (but not as notorious as in some European and Asian countries). It is important to take normal precautions with passports, wallets, and purses, especially in crowded areas. The best way to safeguard a passport is to leave it at home. It is not necessary to carry your passport with you unless you are conducting business, such as opening a bank account. Wallets should be kept in front rather than back pockets. Purses also should be hung in front where they are in sight.

Some grantees worry about threats posed by North Korea. While North Korea is commonly believed to be an armed and hostile state (and not far away), it has very little impact on the daily lives of people in South Korea. Media coverage may imply a tense environment, but most people in South Korea are less worried about North Korea than about finding a parking space (the topic of a 2005 TIME article). Although anti-American sentiment has been in the media spotlight in the past couple years, ETAs are still quite safe in Korea. Demonstrations are fairly peaceful, and much of the action does not affect ETAs in their schools or homestays.

Money & Financial Matters

The basic unit of currency in Korea is the *won*. Bills come in denominations of 1,000 (*cheon won*), 5,000 (*o-cheon won*), 10,000 (*man won*), and 50,000 (*o-man won*). There are 10 (*ship won*), 50 (*o-ship won*), 100 (*baek won*), and 500 (*o-baek won*) coins in circulation. Only banks and other financial institutions use the 1 and 5 won coins. As of May 2010, the exchange rate was about W1,200 to one US dollar. Thus, W1000 is a little less than a dollar. Due to the recent “world economic crisis,” the US Dollar/Korean Won exchange rate has tended to fluctuate frequently. An easy way to keep up with this exchange rate fluctuation is to have it emailed to you daily for free. You can sign up at <http://www.xe.com>.

Bringing Money from the U.S. to Korea

It is up to you whether you bring U.S. cash or traveler’s checks to exchange or withdraw Korean won using your U.S. bankcard (provided it has a Visa or MasterCard logo) at a Korean ATM. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages.

Cash is convenient, although you have to be very careful about where you put it. If you plan on traveling, it can be good, as some countries will accept U.S. Dollars (with no percentage taken out) instead of the country’s native currency (e.g., in Cambodia and Vietnam).

Traveler's checks are safer than cash because they can be replaced if lost or stolen. American Express traveler's checks are the most widely recognized in Korea and throughout Asia. (In the past, a few ETAs had difficulties with Visa ones.) In some instances, American Express traveler's checks have been reported to get better exchange rates than cash.

In most cities, designated "international" ATMs accept foreign cards and can be used to withdraw Korean currency from U.S. accounts. In Seoul, these machines can be found in tourist areas, convenience stores, large subway stations, and some banks (especially Korea Exchange Bank). Keep in mind that your U.S. bank will likely charge a fee each time you make a withdrawal in Korea. Additionally, the Korean ATM may also charge a fee (about \$1) to complete the transaction. Using a U.S. bankcard in Korea is convenient only if you can locate an international ATM, whereas cash and traveler's checks may be exchanged at any bank or exchange agency. Some ETAs using smaller banks have reported difficulty accessing cash through ATMs.

Orientation Stipend

During the summer orientation period, ETAs receive a weekly stipend of W49,000 (about \$49) to cover personal expenses. Fulbright pays for room and board, including three meals a day for the duration of Orientation. Fulbright also covers room and board on all official group outings. Most ETAs find the stipend to be sufficient for day-to-day expenses (snacks, laundry, hygiene products, etc.); however, those who like to shop, eat out frequently, or go out at night may find that the money runs out quickly. Past ETAs recommend bringing pocket money (anywhere from \$400-\$700) to cover extra expenses during Orientation. Money may also be needed for extracurricular activities, utilizing pool facilities, or joining the gym.

Regular Earnings

During the school year, the ETA monthly stipend is W1,600,000, and it is paid by the individual host school. ETAs are *not* allowed to work additional hours for extra compensation. Other paid work is not permitted under the Fulbright contract and is illegal under the A-3 Visa.

Schools may not be able to pay ETAs until the end of the first month of teaching. Fulbright provides a small settling-in allowance (around W200,000) to cover moving-in expenses, but this may leave ETAs low on cash for the first month at their placement. Some schools are able to organize an early payment schedule for ETAs, but these arrangements are made on an individual basis at each school. While many ETAs found the settling-in allowance to be enough to get them through the first few weeks, some bring extra money for this period or have easy access to

money back home through a bank card with Visa or Mastercard logo. (Recommended amounts to bring are \$200-\$300.) Once regular payment begins, ETAs are paid a monthly stipend from September to July in accordance with the individual school's pay schedule.

Korea is not a cheap country, but most ETAs find the monthly stipend to be more than adequate to cover daily expenses and weekend travel. Many ETAs find that they do not spend their entire stipend each month and save the remainder, send it home, or use it to finance winter break travel.

Banking

Korea is a cash society. Most of Korea has skipped the "check-writing" era completely and gone to online payments, which are cheap, efficient, reliable, and universal. Most ETAs will have their stipend transferred electronically each month to their bank account. A local Korean bank account is necessary for cash wire transfers. After moving to their placement city, ETAs should have someone from the school or homestay assist them in opening a local bank account.

Recommended banks include Korean Exchange Bank (Waehwan Eunhaeng), Nong Hyup, Woori Bank, and Kookmin.

Transferring or Taking Money to the U.S.

Korean won may be taken out of the country or converted into U.S. dollars. It is also possible to wire money from Korea to the U.S. Wire transfers require a passport and the receiving U.S. bank's information (usually, the bank's Swift code, your account number, the routing number, and the bank's address), along with the local account information. An unused check and deposit slip from your U.S. bank can help the Korean bank determine the correct routing number. The usual cost of wire transfers in Korea is around \$12-15. Additionally, before completing a wire transfer, be sure to ask your US bank if they charge for incoming wire transfers. Many US banks charge around \$10 to \$20 for this service, and total fees (US and Korea) can sometimes add up to around \$30 - \$40 in some cases.

Anyone with a U.S. passport and an international air ticket can pay in won to purchase up to \$10,000 in traveler's checks. Banker's cashier's checks or smaller denomination traveler's checks are also options for bringing money back to the U.S. The won equivalent of up to \$10,000 in cash may also be brought into the United States.

Credit Cards

Credit cards are widely used in Korea, but in some small restaurants and stores, international cards may be refused. Korean credit cards can be difficult to obtain without Korean citizenship. A few banks in Seoul provide credit cards at high interest rates for foreigners.

There are a variety of ways to pay American credit card bills from Korea. These days, the most popular method is online payments. Past ETAs have also brought checkbooks to Korea and sent checks to the U.S. each month. Wiring money directly tends to be costly. Others ran up a surplus on their credit card accounts by writing checks in advance so that they had already paid their bills before making purchases. Giving power of attorney to a relative, or adding a relative as a co-signer to your account, and having that person pay your bills from your account is also an option.

It is possible to get cash advances using your credit card (Visa or MasterCard) at international ATMs in Korea. To do this you need your credit card's PIN. Contact your credit card company to receive it and confirm before your arrival that it works. Also, check your daily withdrawal/advance limit and be aware of any fees or interest rates associated with such transactions.

Citibank

There are several Citibank branches in Seoul and scattered throughout other major cities. If you have a U.S. Citibank account, you should be able to access it directly. You will only be able to withdraw funds from your account. See <http://www.citibank.co.kr/> for more information.

Student Loan Deferments

The Fulbright program is an authorized signatory, so it is possible to defer student loans during your grant period. ETAs with loans to pay should contact their lenders and universities to get the proper loan deferment request forms and bring them to Korea. ETAs are responsible for filling out all necessary loan deferment requests prior to arriving in Korea. Forms can be found online (<http://www.educaid.com/forms/hjfedtw7.pdf>) and must be sent to Jonathan Akeley at IIE.

Taxes

By law, ETAs must file U.S. taxes while in Korea. The basic principle of U.S. taxes is to report all income, including grant money from Fulbright, even if it may not be taxed. The Fulbright office cannot legally give advice regarding taxes. Arrange to bring the necessary paperwork or have it sent. Publications 520 (Scholarships and Fellowships), 54 (Tax Guide for U.S. Citizens

and Resident Aliens Abroad), and 593 (Tax Highlights for U.S. Citizens and Residents Abroad), distributed by the IRS, are helpful. These are available on the IRS Web-site (<http://www.irs.gov>). Note: Although ETAs receive an automatic 60-day extension by living overseas, they will have to pay interest from April 15 on any unpaid taxes. H&R Block (<http://www.hrblock.com>) has offices in Seoul and can assist you with your preparation. ETAs do not pay Korean taxes.

Communications

Mail

The Korean postal system has a full range of services including registered and certified mail. If a letter is sent via international airmail, the delivery time is around 7-10 days for most destinations in the U.S. Post offices operate during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, and large branches are also open on Saturday mornings. You may also send local and international mail from your local Family Mart (a mini-mart located throughout South Korea), albeit at higher prices.

Fulbright advises ETAs to use the KAEC address (see Appendix B) until they have moved to their placement school. This address may be used at any time during the stay in Korea, but it may be more convenient to receive mail at the placement school later on. ETA mail (letters) sent to the Fulbright office will be forwarded to the ETA's school. Packages, however, must be picked up by the ETA at the office in Seoul during normal business hours.

Telephone

Korea has good and reliable nationwide telephone services. A direct dialing system is operative for domestic and international calls. Pay phones are everywhere and are inexpensive to use. Prepaid international phone cards bought in Korea can be used with cell phones, pay phones, and private lines. Some cards offer international calls for less than 10 cents per minute. Fulbright provides each ETA with a W10,000 (~ \$10) international calling card at the beginning of Orientation. Phone cards are sold at many convenience stores around Korea. The best deals can be found in Seoul at newspaper kiosks near bus stops and in Itaewon; a common amount is W10,000 for one hour of international service.

Recently, a number of ETAs have turned to Skype (www.skype.com) and other Internet phone programs to stay in touch with family and friends while in Korea. With a microphone, speakers or headset, and an Internet connection, parties can talk over the Internet for free or call U.S. numbers for rates around 2 cents per minute. Skype also has video capabilities when calling via the internet if the computer(s) used have either an external or internal computer camera. ETAs

can also purchase a SkypeIN account for around \$30-60 (depending on the length of one's subscription), which gives the buyer a local U.S. number and voicemail that friends and family can use to call them in Korea, avoiding international long distance fees. There are also many international dialing services that you can use to call outside of Korea at cheaper rates (think 10-10-220).

Almost everyone has a cell phone in Korea, even in rural areas, but Korean law prohibits foreigners from acquiring cell phones with regular monthly plans due to frequent non-payment of bills by foreign customers. (Foreigners who purchase cell phones must pay for service in advance and have higher per-minute rates.) However, as part of its safety policy, Fulbright requires ETAs to purchase a cell phone upon arrival at their host schools. It is important for Fulbright to be able to contact ETAs at all times in case of an emergency.

It is the school or the co-teacher's responsibility to secure a monthly plan for the ETA, and the ETA is responsible for the initial cost of purchasing the phone and paying the bill on a monthly basis. To cover this expense, in addition to the ETA's regular stipend, W100,000 is provided to the ETA by the school on a monthly basis for telecommunication fees. Most ETAs' cell phone bills are less than W100,000 per month, however, so they can pocket the difference as part of their monthly stipend. At the end of the ETA's grant term, it is the school's responsibility to cancel the cell phone contract on the ETA's behalf. Since ETAs purchase the phones, not the schools, ETAs may keep the phone at the end of their grant term.

Internet & Email

Korea is reportedly the most "wired" country in the world, and broadband connections are far more prevalent than dial-up ones. Every school in Korea has Internet access if not Broadband Internet access, at least in the teachers' office. Most ETAs have Internet connections at their homestays, and are able to share connections with avid Internet gamers and web surfers in the family. Some ETAs set up their own private Internet lines in their homestays (about W40,000-70,000); others choose to use *PC bangs* (Internet cafes) instead. Internet cafes are everywhere, even in small towns. They usually provide full Internet services for around \$1 per hour and sometimes have word processing and printing services as well. PC bangs are frequented by students and businessmen alike, most often to play computer games. Thus, some PC bangs may be dimly lit, noisy, and smoky.

For some reason, email sent from Korea sometimes has compatibility problems with university accounts (.edu) and America Online (aol.com). Fulbright recommends that ETAs switch over to

a free web-based account (Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.) prior to arrival. The Fulbright office will utilize an email listserv to stay in contact with ETAs throughout the year, so it's imperative that ETAs' email accounts accept messages from the Korea-originated fulbright.or.kr domain. Notify the ETA Program Coordinator any time your primary email address changes.

Computers & Electronics

Many ETAs recommend bringing a laptop for email, playing games, downloading music, and lesson planning (e.g., using PowerPoint, showing websites or movies using monitors in the classroom, etc.). But laptops are not necessary for survival in Korea. ETAs usually have their own desktop in the teacher's office; at the very least, they have access to a shared computer in the office. Since most ETAs are at school for a major portion of the day, they can often take care of their "computer business" between classes.

Laptops need a LAN (Ethernet) card and standard Internet (RJ45 Ethernet) cable to access the Internet. Newer laptops usually have built-in LAN/Ethernet capabilities, but older laptops may require PCMCIA cards. Make sure your equipment works before coming to Korea. It is best to bring all necessary components with you rather than purchasing them during Orientation. Local computer supply stores have depleted their stock in the past trying to meet all of the ETAs' computing needs.

Wireless connections are available in Korea but not at the Orientation site. Some coffee shops in Seoul and other cities are equipped with free wireless, just as in the U.S. For exact wireless locations in Korea, try searching JiWire (www.jiwire.com).

Bring your computer's original operating system, driver, program CDs, manuals, and serial numbers in case you need to reinstall anything. Also, keep in mind that viruses are just as common (if not more so) in Korea as in the U.S. Make sure you have up-to-date anti-virus software installed.

Devices with power supplies (laptops, battery chargers, etc.) need to be 220V compatible to work in Korea. Devices that do not have 220V capability should be left at home, since they require bulky power converters, though converters can usually be purchased at Wal-Mart or other electronics stores. Almost all laptop computers should have AC inputs of 100-240V AC or 60/50 Hz 1.5A, which means they will work fine in Korea. For other devices, the owner's manual or bottom of the AC adapter/power block should have information on voltage capability.

Devices with 220V capability only need adapter plugs to fit Korean wall sockets (these are the same as in Western Europe; see picture below.). Korean wall sockets are not grounded, which simply means there are only two holes instead of three, as in the U.S. However, the adapters, as shown below, will still work with plugs with three prongs (e.g., U.S. laptop power blocks). These adaptors can be bought at the orientation site (for less than \$1); but in the past, local suppliers have run out and have had to order more, which took about a week. Still, ETAs are discouraged from buying these adaptors prior to coming to Orientation, as they cost much more in America.



Caption: adaptor plug for Korean wall sockets.

Laundry & Dry Cleaning

Coin-operated laundry facilities are available at the orientation site, and your homestay will have a washing machine. Most Korean homes do not have dryers, though, and everything is air-dried on drying racks. There are a limited number of dryer at Orientation, so ETAs will more than likely air-dry their clothes during Orientation as well. Additionally, past ETAs report that Korean washing machines are more vigorous than in the U.S., and cotton will stretch. So, it's safe to expect that some of your clothes will be "abused" in this process. Mesh laundry bags can be good for protecting delicate items like bras in the washing machine.

Dry cleaners are ubiquitous and cheap. Some dry cleaners offer a pick-up service, and you can have your dry cleaning delivered to your door.

Travel

ETAs are encouraged to use their time off from school to travel within Korea. In addition to holidays, some schools give ETAs extra days off during exam periods (although notification is usually last minute). Public transportation within and between cities is relatively cheap and easy with a variety of options.

Public Transportation

Subways

Although no first-year ETAs are assigned to Seoul, many ETAs visit the city frequently. The Seoul subway system is clean and efficient and is usually the fastest and most reliable way of getting around metropolitan Seoul, though it can be extremely crowded during the morning and evening rush hours. There are also smaller subway systems in Busan, Daegu, and Gwangju, and a new one is under construction in Daejeon.

Within metropolitan Seoul, the basic subway fare is W1000 with a ticket and W900 with a T-Money pass card. Long trips involving connections will cost a little extra, depending on how far you are going. The names of subway stops are printed in English and Korean. The different lines are color-coded and numbered, although the colors are sometimes difficult to tell apart and vary on different maps. The stops are numbered as well, and it is relatively easy to make transfers without getting lost.

Local Buses

Almost all areas in Seoul are served by local bus routes. Most large cities also have local bus and inter-city bus routes. You can pay in cash (coins or W1,000 bills) or, in some cities, with a pass card. You might have to ask your school or homestay for help with navigating the bus system at first, as all signs may be in Korean, and the routes may be confusing. In Seoul, the subway pass cards work on city buses as well, and transfers between buses and subways are free.

Taxis

Taxis in Korea are inexpensive compared to those in the U.S., with a starting fare of W2,200 (in Seoul). Only four passengers are allowed in a taxi; drivers are very strict about this rule. Wearing a seatbelt in the front seat is mandatory. Taxis are generally safe, but women traveling alone at night should sit in the back. Taxis are also used as a means of public conveyance in the countryside. When going to an out-of-the-way place, a taxi can be hired, although it isn't cheap. Be sure to make arrangements to be picked up later or have the taxi driver wait. Most taxi companies offer a call service for a W1,000 fee (higher in Seoul). You can ask the driver for a card with the phone number of the company (or in some cases, the driver's cell phone number). Restaurants and tourist attractions are also usually able to call a taxi for pickup service.

Domestic Travel

Airlines

Air service is available to all major destinations within Korea. Fares are reasonable and service is reliable. Flights are available at regular intervals throughout the day between major destinations, such as Seoul, Busan, Daegu, Gwangju, and Jeju Island. In Seoul, domestic flights go through Gimpo Airport, and international flights go through Incheon International Airport. Incheon also has a limited number of domestic flights to Jeju, Daegu, and Busan. For information on domestic air service, <http://www.koreanair.com> and <http://flyasiana.com/english> are good places to start.

Trains

Trains are efficient, safe, and inexpensive. Tickets can be purchased at the station or at various booking agents. If you know someone with a Barota (Korail membership) card, they can reserve tickets for you over the phone or online. Advance purchase of a reserved seat is recommended on the weekends and during holidays. There are several different types of trains. The KTX (Korea Train Express) train travels from Seoul Station to Busan and from Yongsan Station to Mokpo at 300 kph. It's the most expensive train in Korea, but the convenience of traveling across the country in half the time makes it worth the expense sometimes. *Saemaeul* is the fastest and most comfortable non-express train. *Mugunghwa* is also good, but slightly slower than *Saemaeul*, as it stops at more stations. The commuter train, *Tongil*, is very slow. If trains are full, *Mugunghwa* and *Tongil* trains will often have standing passengers (*ipsok*) in the aisles and perched on armrests. To preserve personal space, request a window seat in advance. For train schedules, reservations, and other information please refer to the Korail English website: http://www.korail.com/en/pr/pr21100/w_pr21110.jsp.

Express Buses

The inter-city bus system in Korea is efficient and faster than trains (except for the KTX). Buses depart for all major provincial cities on a regular schedule, as often as every ten minutes in some cases. Advance purchase of tickets is not necessary except during special holiday periods. On the negative side, buses are subject to more delays than trains, due to highway accidents and heavy traffic. Some people also find the speed and driving style of highway buses in Korea harrowing. In the countryside, all but the most remote villages have bus service. Rural buses are inexpensive but often crowded. If possible, use "Excellent Express" (*udeung*) or "Express" (*gosok*) buses for inter-city travel. These buses are more expensive than regular buses but are considerably more comfortable. Express bus tickets can often also be reserved online for many cities and

destinations. For more information on express buses refer to <http://www.kobus.co.kr/web/eng/index.jsp>.

Cars

The Korean style of driving is often nerve-wracking and scary. Drivers swerve in and out of traffic at break-neck speeds and pass slow cars dangerously. Drunk-driving accidents are on the decline but are still common. Seat belt use is not very common, although a law requires those riding in the front seat to wear a seat belt or face a ₩30,000 fine. Backseat belts are sometimes tucked into the seat because they are seen as an inconvenience, and they are often difficult to dig out. Fulbright strongly encourages ETAs to wear seatbelts at all times.

Overseas Travel

Fulbright policy allows grantees to travel outside their host country for a *maximum* of 28 days during the course of the grant. Of these 28 days, no more than two weeks can be spent in the U.S. The other two weeks can be spent traveling in the region to learn more about Korea's neighbors. Flights from Seoul to all major destinations in Asia are readily available. Discount tickets are sold for most destinations. ETAs must notify the ETA Program Coordinator of all travel plans. ETAs are required to provide contact information in case of emergency.

For flights originating from Korea, it's usually cheaper to book through a travel agency, as opposed to directly through the airline or on the Internet. Travel agency contact information will be available on ETAB after arrival in Korea.

Travel in Asia can be very cheap if one stays in low-cost accommodations and limits food expenses and souvenir shopping. The ETA stipend is usually sufficient to cover one or two international trips during the year. Those planning more luxurious trips may need other sources of cash. In general, it is better to bring U.S. currency to Asian countries and exchange it for the local currency upon arrival. It is easier to exchange U.S. dollars in most Asian countries than it is to exchange Korean won (you will also get better rates). It will also be cheaper and more convenient to exchange money in Korea than in the U.S. In some Southeast Asian markets, U.S. currency is preferred to the local currency. It is useful to have small U.S. bills (\$1s or \$5s) if planning to do bargain shopping in places like Vietnam, Thailand, or China. Korean won can be exchanged for U.S. dollars at major banks in Korea, although a small portion may be lost if rates are unfavorable.

Food

Food is an important part of any culture, and this is especially true in Korea. Korean cuisine has a reputation for being very hot and spicy, although not all dishes are. Korean food is generally healthy and delicious, using basic ingredients of rice, meat, fish, vegetables, and lots of garlic and hot pepper. Despite the popularity of *bulgogi* (grilled marinated beef) and *galbi* in Korean towns located across the U.S.; pork, fish, and other seafood are used more in everyday Korean cuisine than red meat. *Sogoghi* (beef) is also significantly more expensive than *Daejigoghi* (pork) in Korea.

American favorites such as hamburgers and pizza are popular among younger to middle aged people; but in the homestay, food is usually more traditional. A typical Korean home eats an array of four to ten types of *banchan* (side dishes) plus rice and soup. Soups are considered more of an entrée than an appetizer in Korea and families and friends often eat from one large pot of soup placed in the middle of the table (quite sanitary as the soup is usually very hot and will kill off any germs leftover from one's spoon). Individual servings of soup are also offered and it is normal for people to eat their soup with rice. Korean chopsticks are slightly different from the round, wooden or plastic, Chinese-style ones used in America. They are flat and metal, making them slightly more difficult to maneuver. Koreans also use spoons with their chopsticks, and it is acceptable to use spoons often during a meal. However, forks and knives are often reserved for western meals.

One of the biggest culture shocks some ETAs encounter during their first few weeks in Korea is the food, especially for those who are unfamiliar with Korean food. During Orientation, ETAs live in a dormitory and eat three meals a day in the cafeteria. (Eating off-campus is always an option, but only cafeteria meals will be covered by Fulbright.) Similar to cafeteria food in America, the cafeteria food during Orientation is not the best. Many of the dishes are spicy, fishy, unfamiliar, or all of the above. There will always be rice, but ETAs often crave other dietary options. Often ETAs who hate the Orientation cafeteria food go on to love Korean food in their homestays.

With this in mind, ETAs should take a few precautions if they think food could be a problem. It is very easy to lose weight and get sick if one cannot eat the cafeteria food. Bringing food items (and perhaps multivitamins) from home and knowing other food options in the area will help make the summer eating manageable. In the past, the cafeteria has been persuaded to provide bread, milk, soy milk, and jam for breakfast in addition to the typical Korean breakfast of rice,

kimchi, and soup on certain days. Cereal, fruit, yogurt, and juice can be easily purchased at a local supermarket.

Picky eaters can also bring food items from home, such as peanut butter, oatmeal, granola bars, dried soups, instant foods, etc.; however, there are no cooking facilities available in the dorms – only hot water will be available. Peanut butter can be bought in local stores, but it is a bit expensive. Canned tuna is plentiful and cheap and can be good for meal replacements. There are also a handful restaurants close to campus that serve Western foods such as fried chicken and pizza, in addition to plenty of delicious Korean options.

Special Diets

Vegetarians and others with dietary restrictions should notify Fulbright immediately (before coming to Korea) and tell their co-teachers and host families upon arriving at their placements. Although tofu and vegetables are used in many Korean dishes, true vegetarian cuisine can be hard to find. Vegetarian food in Korea includes a lot of tofu, *bibimbap* (vegetables and an egg on top of rice), seaweed-based soups, rice-cake soup, lots of side dishes, fried vegetable fritters, and more; however, most dishes have a small amount of meat (seen or unseen) mixed in with vegetables. Dishes without meat are likely to have some fish. Picking meat out of food is often the only sure-fire vegetarian option available; however, many soups are fish broth-based, so you may end up eating fish without intending to. Some previous ETAs who were vegetarians had to compromise their diet to some extent.

Fulbright does not want to discourage incoming ETAs from maintaining their vegetarianism in Korea, but it is realistic to expect that maintaining any strict eating regimen will not be easy. Vegans have an extremely difficult time maintaining their diets, as many prepared foods contain animal products. While vegetarian restaurants do exist, especially at the bottom of mountains and near Buddhist temples, total vegetarianism is uncommon in Korea. Many Koreans do not even understand the concept of vegetarianism or veganism. (For more information about vegetarian options in Korea, visit this website: <http://wiki.galbijim.com/Portal:Vegetarianism>. For a list of vegetarian restaurants in Seoul, try this website: http://www.happycow.net/asia/south_korea/seoul/)

Many Koreans also do not understand food allergies. This can be very dangerous, especially with foods that can cause anaphylactic shock, such as peanuts or shellfish. ETAs with severe food allergies should notify Fulbright immediately and bring any necessary medication (e.g., Epi-Pen). Upon arriving at placements, explain allergies and medication use to co-teachers and host families. Should there be any problems clearly communicating dietary restrictions, Fulbright can

assist in translation. Maintaining a Kosher diet is impossible in a Korean homestay, unless food is sent from home. If you have specific questions about dietary considerations, contact the Program Coordinator.

Drinking Water

Korean tap water is safe to use for washing and brushing your teeth, but it is not recommended for drinking. Domestic bottled water is readily available. Water served in restaurants is filtered or bottled, and it is safe for drinking. Schools and often homestays will usually have a water cooler that dispenses cold and hot water. The orientation site will also have water coolers.

Coffee & Tea

Korea is a green tea society, but Starbucks has been making its presence known in the large cities. Most Koreans drink instant coffee and tea on a regular basis. Brewed coffee is usually only found at coffee shops for between \$2-5 a cup. Coffee connoisseurs may want to consider bringing or buying a French press mug for personal coffee consumption. Additionally, black tea is hard to find in bags.

Eating Out

Besides Korean restaurants of all kinds, there are an increasing number of “foreign” restaurants. Western-style food is quite common, especially in downtown areas and shopping districts;. However, not all will taste true to origin. Many foreign foods have been adapted to fit the Korean taste and sometimes “International” food is actually just another variety of Korean food (e.g. *bulgogi* pizza and *kimchi* spaghetti). Chinese, Japanese, Italian, and American restaurants are fairly common and range from relatively inexpensive “Koreanized” places to more authentic and expensive establishments. More international (Thai, Indian, French, Mexican, etc.), authentic-tasting foods can be found in Seoul, but they are rare in other places.

American-style fast food restaurants are common, including McDonald’s, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Pizza Hut. More middle-range chains are also becoming popular in the larger Korean cities; TGIFriday’s, Bennigan’s, and Outback are often found in major shopping districts and tourist areas. Starbucks, Dunkin Donuts and Baskin Robbins can be found in almost every city; in addition, there are a handful of Krispy Kreme donut stores in Seoul and other major cities.

Availability of “American” Foods

Although ETAs typically don’t cook much in the homestay, it is good to visit big supermarkets located on the basement level of major department stores in Korea to see what kinds of imported

foods are available. Many people, Korean and foreign, prefer to do their food shopping in these large and relatively modern supermarkets. They often have international sections that carry Western brands, although at high prices. The following is a list of some American-style foods that can be found in Korea.

Cereal: Fruit Loops, Frosted Flakes, Corn Flakes, Cocoa Puffs (There are similar Korean brands as well; these are the most widely available American brands).

Cheese: “Real” cheese is hard to find in Korea. Typically, easy-to-find cheese is similar to Kraft Singles in the U.S. Also, mozzarella cheese (known as “pizza cheese”) is easy to find. Some department stores and bakeries also carry Philadelphia cream cheese.

Jelly/Jam: Available in most bakeries and food stores.

Peanut butter: Available in bakeries (Crown Bakery, Paris Baguette, etc.) and some grocery stores, even in small towns. A medium-sized jar of Skippy costs about 8,000W.

Spaghetti & sauce: Spaghetti noodles and sauces are available in just about every food store. Bigger stores may even have Ragu.

Yogurt: Yoplait and Korean brands are widely available in strawberry, peach, grape, and plain flavors.

Chocolate milk: Nesquik and Korean brands

Popcorn: Pop Secret and similar Korean brands can be found in convenience stores, usually located near a microwave oven.

Pringles: Surprisingly enough, these can be easily found everywhere. There are even some special Asian flavors, such as “Funky Soy Sauce” and “Crispy Curry.”

Chips, cookies, crackers: A wide variety of Korean brands are readily available at any convenience store or mart; Oreo, Ritz, and other similar brands can also be found in some locations.

Entertainment & Information Resources

Korea offers a wide variety of entertainment, ranging from modern city nightlife to tours of ancient cultural sites. Entertainment options include hiking craggy mountains, watching Korean and American movies (normally released a little later than in the U.S.), Western- and Korean-style pubs, arcades, and *noraebang* (karaoke clubs).

One of the best ways to find out about cultural events such as art exhibitions, movies, plays, and other performances is to check the calendar sections of English-language newspapers. (See Appendix D.) Current and upcoming events are listed with telephone numbers to call for more information. The Korean National Tourism Organization (KNTTO) is also a good resource for

information about Korea and events (<http://www.knto.or.kr/> or <http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/index.kto>). Brochures and booklets are available at the KNTTO office, and tickets and travel reservations can be arranged there.

Seoul Selection (www.seoulselection.com) is a book and video store that also sends free weekly newsletters via email including events and cultural information. The store has a great selection of Korea-related books, movies, etc. The Royal Asiatic Society (RAS, www.raskb.com) also has a good selection of books of all kinds on Korea, everything from scholarly publications to popular guidebooks. Membership to the Korea Branch of RAS includes a regular semi-monthly lecture series as well as discounts on books and excellent tours. In addition, Fulbright has a small library for ETAs with books on Korea-related topics including Korean history, culture, language, literature, and politics.

International publications such as the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*, are available for sale at large bookstores and some newsstands.

See Appendices D and E for more useful websites and recommended books on Korea.

Shopping

Shopping can be an overwhelming experience initially. Items may not be where you expect them to be and trying to read and understand labels and price tags can be frustrating. Make sure to take a dictionary or phrasebook—or better yet, a Korean guide (a colleague or a student) — with you on your first few shopping expeditions. Learning the Korean number system as soon as possible will be a big help, and many communication problems can be solved by simple body language. Sometimes shoppers can bargain at the large outdoor markets or Korean retail stores; but department stores, supermarkets, and convenience stores have fixed prices.

Markets in most towns and cities will carry almost anything one needs to survive in Korea. The major department stores are a good place to get basic goods and clothes, if one likes (and fits into) Korean fashions. Lotte, Hyundai, and Shinsegae are the major, high-end department stores and have branches in many cities. Prices are somewhat high, but good deals can be found during sale seasons. They carry a number of name brands from Louis Vuitton to Nike. Migliore, Doota, and 2pm are low-to mid-end department stores that are also located in every big city. They offer a variety of clothes and accessories at cheap prices, but carry only a limited size selection. There is also a number of chain super-centers (think Wal-Mart or Target) scattered throughout most cities. E-Mart, HomePlus, Lotte Mart, and GS Mart, to name a few, offer groceries, office

supplies, toiletries, clothing, etc., at low prices. Korea does not have a “supermarket” in the sense of an American grocery store. Instead, each of these large marts and stores has a separate grocery section. There are also several Costco stores located in Seoul, Daejeon, and Daegu.

Some of the best places for shopping in Seoul are below:

Myeong-dong (명동): A trendy shopping district that caters to tourists and locals alike. Located in downtown Seoul it houses a number of clothing boutiques, coffee shops, restaurants, and bars. Prices in the stores can be quite high, but you can often get good deals on shoes, bags, sunglasses, scarves, and T-shirts at the street stalls crowding the main avenue. Japanese tourists often come to Myeong-dong specifically to buy cheap eyeglasses. Some of the more popular stores include Forever21, Uniqlo, H&M, and Zara. Macintosh also recently launched their flagship 5-story store in the middle of Myeong-dong. It also has South Korea’s only Cathedral Church which provides Korean mass services throughout the week and an English mass on Sundays. During peak hours, streets will get very congested and visitors will find it hard to move.

Dongdaemun Market (동대문, East Gate): Clothing and wholesale goods at reasonable prices, although sizes run on the small side. Also open in the afternoon and all night. Chung Gae Chun, a beautiful man-made stream, runs through Dongdaemun Market and is often frequented by tourists and couples. This area along with Myeong-dong is especially crowded on Christmas day, as they are adjacent to each other.

COEX Mall: Underground shopping mall in Gangnam district. Largest underground shopping mall in Asia and has hundreds of shops, aquariums, and a large bookstore. Most stores are a bit on the pricey side.

Apgu-Jung (압구정): A high class shopping area in the Gangnam district. Known for its upscale department shops, stores, and restaurants, it is often frequented by celebrities.

Insa-dong (인사동): Traditional tea houses, arts and crafts galleries, and stores selling traditional Korean pottery, paintings, and other goods. A great place to visit on Sunday afternoons when performers and vendors take over the street, which is closed to traffic. Be sure to check out the side streets as well as the main road. Fewer tourists venture down these streets, and you can enjoy quieter shops with a less “touristy” feel.

Namdaemun Market (남대문, South Gate): A wholesale, outdoor market that sells everything from clothing to camping supplies to pig heads. A great place just to sightsee; open during the day and all night.

Itaewon (이태원): Near the main U.S. army post, this is primarily a hangout for foreigners. It is hands down, one of the, if not the best place for non-Korean food in South Korea. It is one of Seoul's most famous shopping districts and enjoys a notorious nightlife district. It is also a good place to buy souvenirs and larger-sized clothing.

Ewha Women's University (오대) Area: This area has been greatly influenced by the female population; it boasts a cutting-edge fashion district and a wide variety of eateries, cafes, clothing boutiques, street stalls, and hair salons.

Techno Mart: Offers every kind of household electronic device and appliance imaginable. Some bargaining is acceptable, although prices are already fairly reasonable.

Yongsan Electronics Market: A huge electronics superstore, similar to Techno Mart. It is advisable to check prices on items with several sellers before making a purchase. It may be difficult to get prices reduced, but you can sometimes get accessories or upgrades thrown in for free.

Clothing & Shoe Sizes

Women wearing over a size 8 and men wearing an XL or larger will have difficulty buying clothing in Korea, as sizes tend to run smaller. All clothing sizes can be found in Itaewon, Myeong-dong, and other areas that sell American and European brand name clothing (look above).

Bras are usually only available in A and B cups up to about a size 38.

If you have small and narrow feet, you will be able to purchase shoes easily in Korea. But if your feet are wider than normal or larger than a size 8 for women or size 11 for men, past ETAs recommend bringing or having shipped all of the shoes you will need for the year.

Religion and Religious Services

English-language Protestant and Catholic services are held in Seoul and other large cities. Korean-language church services are everywhere – about thirty percent of the Korean population is Christian (of which 18.3% profess to be Protestants and 10.9% to be Catholics). About 23% of

Koreans consider themselves Buddhist. Jewish services are held on the U.S. military post in Seoul, but they may not be regularly held elsewhere in Korea. Also, Jewish holidays may be hard to observe. Try to negotiate ahead of time any time off or travel assistance you will need. Korea has one Islamic mosque, in Seoul, and it has services in Arabic, Korean, and English. About thirty percent of Koreans are Buddhist, and Buddhist temples are numerous. A Buddhist center called Lotus Lantern is operated for the foreign community. The Saturday editions of the *Korea Times* and *Korea Herald* list religious service information for foreigners.

Non-Christian ETAs may notice that Korean Christians are more outward with their faith. Some host families and colleagues may pressure you to attend church services or attempt to convert you. Past ETAs recommend setting boundaries early regarding religion and faith and remaining open-minded and honest about it.

Dietary restrictions (especially faith-based ones) will be an issue that will be discussed at length by host families and colleagues and may not be fully understood. Future ETAs should prepare for many questions.

Korean Culture and Customs: Understanding Korean Society as an ETA

Race

One of the greatest challenges of living in Korea is being immersed in an almost completely racially homogeneous environment. Bruce Cummings, author of *Korea's Place in the Sun*, writes, "[F]ew of the world's people live in a nation with no significant ethnic, racial, or linguistic difference: Korea is indeed one of the most homogeneous nations on earth, where ethnicity and nationality coincide." This poses great challenges to all ETAs, regardless of race and ethnicity.

Until recently, Koreans had little exposure to foreigners of any kind. Consequently, their awareness of America as having a more diverse population than what is portrayed on television is simply underdeveloped. For many Koreans, an American is a Euro-American and their understanding of racial identity hinges most heavily on physical appearance. Some Korean colleagues and host families have been known to ask odd questions and/or make unintentionally hurtful remarks. ETAs should remember that it is not meant to offend, but usually stems from a genuine curiosity. ETAs should prepare to be initially reduced to their apparent (visible) race. It's hard to say exactly how this will affect one's individual ETA experience, but generally

speaking, it is imperative that individuals from diverse backgrounds come to Korea with especially open minds.

Euro-Americans should be prepared for the idealization of European features that predominates Korean culture. Having ‘big eyes’, a high nose and a ‘small face’- (this is usually termed as “small head”) are considered beautiful in Korea. Consider how you might want to respond should a student or other Korean idealize your features simply for your ancestry, and what it implies about their perceptions of beauty. Past ETAs (of all backgrounds) have found it helpful to teach a lesson on beauty perception and racial stereotypes.

For Korean-Americans, issues of identity can be very complex. Many Korean-Americans come to Korea expecting to fit into the culture better than their non Korean-American peers. While many are welcomed and immersed into the culture, others are discouraged to realize that they are often considered not “Korean” enough and/or not “American enough.” Although they are spared much of the staring and pointing, they have another set of problems unique to Korean-Americans: they may be expected to speak Korean fluently and know Korean culture thoroughly, or vice versa, not be able to speak Korean at all and have no understanding of Korean culture. These assumptions come from a lack of understanding of different cultural identities.

Korean-American adoptees also have a unique set of issues when coming to Korea. Many past ETAs have come to Korea for the first time since they were adopted at a young age. More and more, Korean people are learning about adoption and are becoming aware of Korean adoptees currently living overseas, as well as those returning to Korea. Reactions vary from sadness and pity to surprise. For many Koreans, it is not the first time that they have heard of adoptees coming to Korea. Although adoptees may feel only positive about their upbringing, Koreans may react to their adoption in pity, sadness, or surprise. Some adoptees choose to use their time in Korea to search for their birth parents, while others choose not to. It is up to the individual, and while there might be pressure to search, it is ultimately a personal decision. Adoptees should be prepared to receive a lot of questions about adoption from Koreans and their ETA peers. These questions usually stem from a sense of curiosity and concern but can come across as rude, especially if the adoptee is not prepared to handle them.

Non-Korean Asians may also encounter the ethnicity-as-nationalism scenario. Korea is a very homogenous country and, as a result, often equates ethnicity with nationalism. It is not unheard of for Koreans to espouse their views on Japan, China and South East Asian countries in terms of

ethnicity. Regardless of your background, ETAs in Korea are often faced with questions to their racial and ethnic identity.

Some advice from past ETAs:

- Be able to give a quick response regarding your background and family history.
- Be prepared to make an extra effort to prove your “American-ness” or “Korean-ness.”
- Try to not be offended by personal questions, remarks expressing disbelief, and odd conjectures about your background.
- Keep an open-mind and your sense of humor and always attempt to view the experience as an educational opportunity.

Gender

Confucianism has shaped many aspects of Korean life. ETAs will most likely find the state of Korean gender roles and representations in constant flux—a reality of the conflict between traditional and modern gender perspectives. Korea is a country traditionally governed by Confucian ideals that emphasize male dominance in tandem with female submission, as well as the importance of sons (particularly first born) to carry on a family’s name and status. Although age is another important—in some cases more important—factor in the traditional Korean hierarchy, ETAs will probably experience first-hand the pressures of these Confucian gender values in their daily lives.

Although gender equality is improving in Korea, it is sometimes visible in ETAs’ working and living environments. Korean men have significantly greater status and power than women, a result of traditional Confucian values. For instance, men usually hold positions of administrative authority such as principal of a school. Both men and women experience a narrow range of employment choices because of strictly defined gender roles. It’s a little unusual to have friends of the opposite sex. Many people assume that a man and woman alone together are a romantic couple. Males are often pressured to drink heavily with other male colleagues. Non-Asian females are sometimes viewed as sex objects. Some Koreans believe the stereotype that all American women behave in the same promiscuous manner that women in American movies do. These gender inequalities can be upsetting to some Americans. One ETA recommended viewing them through the eyes of a cultural anthropologist. It can turn a very frustrating experience into an interesting lesson on gender equality and assumptions taken for granted in America.

While observing gender and status relations can be quite fascinating, sexual harassment is not. Sexual harassment occurs all over the world; South Korea is no exception. For non-Asian women especially, it is important to be aware of one's self and one's surroundings. In general, Korea is very safe and poses few physical dangers; however, foreign women may be propositioned by taxi drivers and men on the street. The best advice is to walk away and try to dismiss it. Sexual harassment is a reality that several ETAs have had to face both in public and in private. Sexual harassment, reporting it, and methods for keeping yourself safe will be covered in detail at Orientation. Remember, Fulbright is there to support ETAs should they feel unsafe or threatened.

Sexuality

As with gender constructs, sexuality in Korea appears (initially and topically) to be rigidly conservative. Schools do not have sexual education programs. Knowledge about safe-sex practices, birth control, and STDs are lacking at best and purposely obscured and/or misconstrued at worst. The single-gender education system employed in middle and high schools to a much larger extent than in America can lead to the mystification of the opposite sex and a lower emotional and sexual maturity level than their American counterparts. Even in the adult world, couples have few public displays of affection, though in larger cities and among younger people that is beginning to change.

These facts may seem startling to incoming ETAs, but they will soon find that the truths of Korean sexuality are quite different. Young and older people alike frequent night clubs and “love motels” for casual hookups; establishments are designated specifically for phone or computer encounters; singing rooms sometimes offer extra services for wealthier clients; and prostitution is common in red-light districts. The most pronounced difference between American and Korean sexuality is probably the Korean division between professional/academic/family/etc. life and sexual life—with the two not overlapping in the same way they often do in America (i.e. visible relationships in these places).

- **Foreign Male Sexuality** - Foreign men in Korea have two distinct identities—one to Korean women and one to Korean men. Korean women may consider them more attractive than Korean men because of their height, hair and eye color, and even body hair. But while this attention can be flattering, many foreign men find that some women are interested in them for English practice or cultural novelty. Some ETAs may find Korean men to be intimidated by the mere stereotype of foreign men. Others may find—especially in their school environments—that once they become integrated into a male

social group they may be placed in awkward situations or they may be the focus of friendly, non-sexual affection from their male co-workers.

- Foreign Female Sexuality- As with foreign men, foreign (particularly white) women are commonly fetishized in Korean culture. But whereas foreign men are seen as charming and powerful, foreign women are often seen in a much more overtly sexual way due to the influx of American media images. Though most Koreans are receptive to having these views challenged and changed, female ETAs should be aware that their behavior will be magnified through this cultural lens.

In general, ETAs should not be discouraged by stereotypes and should not be too quick to stereotype themselves. Because despite some cultural differences and misunderstandings, many ETAs have gone on to make lasting friendships and positive non-platonic relationships with Koreans throughout their grant year.

Homosexuality, Bisexuality, and Transgender Issues

It is extremely common for Koreans to pose the question: "Do you have a boy/girl friend?" Heterosexual ETAs may feel uncomfortable answering this question but for non-heterosexual ETAs it poses an even larger concern. In the traditional Confucian mold there was no place for homosexuality as it could not produce the core unit of father, mother and child. In modern Korea—largely thanks to the conservative media's public stronghold—the common conception of homosexuality is as a Western phenomenon absent from Korean culture. Some Koreans, especially of the older generation, believe that Korean homosexuality is non-existent and that homosexuality anywhere should be viewed negatively. But many younger or more liberal Koreans are beginning to treat homosexuality and bisexuality with interest and increasing acceptance. Of course the cultural attitudes vary from place to place but non-heterosexual ETAs may be surprised to find less hostility towards the idea than they anticipated. Recently the Korean entertainment business has been credited with helping to change the nation's perceptions of homosexuality. One of Korea's top-grossing films, *The King and the Clown*, focuses on a gay love triangle. However, as with sexuality in general, ETAs should be cautious as to whom they choose to confide in about their personal lives and how much detail they offer. Coming out to Korean family members, co-workers, and/or friends is not impossible, but the decision should be made with due consideration.

Transgender issues are dealt with somewhat more openly than homosexuality and bisexuality, due in large part to the thriving plastic surgery industry that makes Korea a top location for gender reassignment surgery. Many major cities have transgender bars and clubs, and ETAs may

be shocked to discover how common cross-dressing is as a ritual during school or club festivals, particularly among boys. There are tight-knit GLB (gay, lesbian and bisexual) and transgender communities in Korea made up of both Koreans and foreigners; the largest concentration of “gay” establishments is in the Itaewon and Hongdae districts of Seoul. ETAs may also find community resources online, particularly on Gay Utopia (www.utopia-asia.com).

Touching

Ironically, platonic same-sex relationships are often very physically affectionate and may be perceived by Westerners as homosexual. It is not unusual to see men walking hand-in-hand down the street or girls with arms linked at the waist. (On the other hand, public physical affection between members of the opposite sex is still rare, except in Seoul and among younger couples.) As a result, ETAs will encounter various incursions on personal space. Students, teachers, and strangers alike often pat or rub ETAs arms, hold hands with them, and/or physically guide them to different places. These actions are by and large considered friendly overtures and are not meant to be sexual, condescending, or offensive; however, it can still be surprising, and ETAs should be aware that it might occur.

Body Image

Beauty standards are *highly* influenced by pop culture trends. The “ideal” Korean woman is seen as thin, delicate, and pale (you will notice many Korean women carrying around parasols in the summer for this purpose as well as a myriad of “whitening” products). Furthermore, the ideal weight for Korean women is often cited as 47- kg (around 100 pounds). Korean men are also subjected to strict beauty standards—tall, thin, and clean-cut (no facial hair).

As a result, plastic surgery has become increasingly popular in Korea. One of the most common surgeries is the double eyelid surgery to enlarge the appearance of a person’s eyes as large, attractive eyes are a standard for beauty in Korea. . However, even this perception of beauty is being single handedly challenged by international pop-star Rain (이재민) with his unconventional yet handsome appearance. One of the more extreme surgeries involves the removal of calf muscles to make legs appear slimmer and longer. Koreans are extremely focused on dieting and do not consider it rude to suggest that someone should diet.

This focus on thinness and comments about one’s appearance can easily contribute to a negative body image, especially for ETAs accustomed to the acceptance, or at least presence, of a wider range of bodies in America. Though anorexia and bulimia are as prevalent in Korea as in the U.S., Korea largely lacks awareness of and treatment for these eating disorders. Many ETAs

have noticed clear signs of eating disorders among students and adults but were unable to find proper avenues to discuss them.

As a foreigner try to be mindful that comments made toward you stem from Korean cultural values and are a sign of curiosity and caring. They are rarely meant to be offensive. Throughout the year, ETAs will hear many comments directed towards their appearance as well as those around them. Initially, these comments (both positive and negative) may come as a surprise and/or off-putting. Always take these comments with a grain of salt, as Koreans and Americans have different cultural standards when it comes to what is appropriate/inappropriate to say to others regarding appearance. Some of these comments may include:

- “You look tired.” Or “Today, you have dark circles under your eyes.”
- “Your face looks bad today.”
- “Maybe you should gain/lose some weight”
- “Glamorous!/Beautiful!/Cute!/Pretty!” or “So handsome!”
- “You look like [insert name of celebrity you probably don’t really look like here]!”

Specific issues regarding the ETA:

- Freckles and moles are not common in Korea and might be commented upon.
- Facial piercings are also not common (and are generally considered ‘aberrant’) and can often leave a less positive first impression. ETAs with nose/eyebrow/lip/tongue piercings should highly consider purchasing clear studs/plugs to be worn for teaching and official functions.
- Depending on their body type most ETAs will also likely find that their weight will fluctuate. Many actually lose weight because of the change in lifestyle (food, exercise, etc.) though others may gain weight.
- Along with physical changes, ETAs may also find that they become more conscious of their appearances (e.g. makeup use, clothes, hairstyles) and subsequently more conscious and judgmental of other’s appearances.

Being conscious of these issues and the personal changes one may go through will greatly help new ETAs in understanding and processing these issues during their time in Korea.

Korean Manners & Etiquette

An unusual degree of homogeneity has developed among the Korean people during their long history. This is a country with no ethnic minorities, known as the only country in Asia without a Chinatown. In the modern era, in particular, this cultural heritage has been complemented by a strong sense of national identity. Despite the political division of the Korean peninsula since 1945, Koreans still consider themselves to be one nation.

Traditionally, abiding by the rules of propriety has been considered extremely important in Korea. And though Korea has significantly modernized, those rules are still often enforced by society. A great deal of attention is paid to the way one acts and dresses. Facial expressions, tone of voice, body language, and other such characteristics count for a great deal more than most Americans could imagine.

While these traditional practices of propriety are seen in most Korean homes and even in public places in rural areas, they are not especially evident in the everyday urban life of contemporary Korea. On the contrary, much of the behavior witnessed in public places in Korea, especially in Seoul, may seem rude and ill-mannered. It may not be much of a consolation, but many Koreans feel the same way. The anonymity of urban life, the hectic pace, and the sometimes mind-boggling congestion all seem to have combined to make life a “rat race.”

As visitors to Korea, however, ETAs should try to observe as much propriety as possible, especially in relations with coworkers. Respect for traditional values will be appreciated. Even Koreans who do not strictly adhere to these traditional values will appreciate your efforts to adapt to the culture. Past ETAs note that it is best to start out conservatively at first and gradually relax as much as is appropriate in one’s circumstances.

Use of Names

Unlike the United States, first names are used very infrequently in Korea, even among members of the same family. Instead, consistent with the general attention to relationship, the emphasis is on the position of the person referenced. For example, Professor Kim Chul Soo would be called Kim *Gyosunim* (roughly translated as “Honorable Professor Kim”) by everybody except his

closest friends and some members of his family. “Chul Soo” and “Mr. Kim” are both inappropriate forms of address.

One reasonably certain way to avoid offending someone of unknown status is to attach the appellation “*seonsaengnim*” to the person’s surname. This roughly translates as “teacher” and should be complimentary to the person addressed. If the person is entitled to a more distinguished title, he will correct the speaker but will not be offended.

The terms *ajeosshi* (mister) and *ahjumma* (miss) are used to refer to middle-aged men and women. These titles are mainly used to refer or beckon to strangers whose social ranks are unknown to you (e.g. to call your server at a restaurant) However, use with caution, as some younger and not-so-young men and women may be offended by these terms as they imply older age. For women especially, it may be better to call them *agasshi* as it implies youth and beauty.

Tips for Good Etiquette

Use two hands. When passing an object of any kind, both hands are always used (or “symbolic” both hands, using the right hand with the left hand touching the right elbow). Passing with one hand, especially the left hand, is considered rude.

Don’t point. Summoning people or taxis is done by holding the arm out straight, palm down, and flexing the down turned palm toward the body. Never use a crooked finger, as in the U.S. Not only is this impolite, it will often not be understood. Do NOT point at people with the index finger. Instead, indicate someone or something with a nod of the head, a thrust of the chin, or by gesturing using your entire hand.

Do bow—or maybe shake hands. Most Korean men are used to handshaking, but some Korean women are not. Thus while men shake hands with men almost universally, men rarely shake hands with women, or women with women. The safe thing to do is to wait to see if the other person extends a hand; keep in mind that Korean etiquette mandates that handshakes are initiated by the person of higher status. If someone does offer a hand, it is normally polite to take that hand with *both* of yours. It is more common to use the “symbolic” both hands in this case, unless you or they are really excited to greet you. Also note that if you are offered a handshake, Koreans tend to use a gentler handshake, as opposed to a firm American handshake.

Don’t eat with your fingers. When eating Korean food, use chopsticks, spoons, or a toothpick (for eating pieces of fruit). Koreans consider handling food with bare fingers indelicate. Even sandwiches usually are wrapped in a paper napkin. On the other hand, if chopsticks are difficult

to use and there's no fork available, don't hesitate to use the spoon. Koreans use the spoon much more than Americans do. Also, do not rest your chopsticks or spoon straight up in your rice bowl; this is considered bad manners and bad luck since the gesture is used when honoring one's ancestors in Korea.

Don't tip. There is generally no tipping in Korea. A service charge is added to the bill at most hotels and restaurants in lieu of a tip. It is not necessary to tip taxi drivers unless they help carry luggage or provide some extra service.

Remove your shoes (and wear socks). It is considered crude to wear shoes inside one's living space, and wearing socks indoors (especially when you're a guest) is more polite than bare feet.

Do give gifts. Korea has a very prevalent gift-giving culture. Often, ETAs find food, drinks, and even socks or toothbrushes left as gifts on their desks at school. It is important to return the favor. Giving small gifts such as snacks, drinks, etc., can be a great way to show appreciation and promote camaraderie when language and cultural barriers otherwise prevent it.

Smile—and relax! More thorough explanations and additional etiquette guidelines will be discussed during Orientation.

Anti-Americanism & U.S. – Korea Relations

The peace and stability of the Korean peninsula is vital to maintaining the peace and security of Northeast Asia, including Japan and China. For that reason, Korea is considered of great strategic importance to the United States. Since the Korean War, the U.S. has maintained a strong military presence in South Korea; today, U.S. and Korean forces work together to ensure security on the Korean peninsula. However, as a result of the U.S.'s controversial presence, most anti-Americanism is directed toward the American soldiers stationed on bases throughout Korea. Over the next few years, U.S. forces will gradually move from the Yongsan military base in central Seoul to Pyongtaek, which will decrease the presence of U.S. military personnel in Seoul.

Although most of the older generation of Koreans who lived through the Korean War retains friendly feelings toward the U.S., younger people have much more ambiguous feelings about the American role in Korea. Thus ETAs may witness expression of anti-American sentiments, especially from students. Occasionally, tensions flare up during political controversies, such as

the protests against US beef imports in 2008. Other incidents, such as President Bush's "axis of evil" comments about North Korea and a 2002 incident in which two Korean female middle school students were run over and killed by a U.S. military vehicle, have caused flare-ups in anti-American sentiments. Recent events, such as the 2006-08 negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement, reactions to North Korea's nuclear testing and disarmament, and the tragic shootings at Virginia Tech have caused further polarization of opinions.

Even in these more sensitive times, most Koreans express their opposition through candlelight vigils and protest marches and Koreans rarely act out on their anger or frustration toward foreigners directly. Many of the Koreans who express such views make a distinction between "anti-Americanism" (*banmi*) and "criticism of U.S. foreign policy" (*bimi*). The former generally is associated with a relatively small group of younger people, mostly students. The latter, which resembles the thinking behind newspaper editorials, is criticism directed at specific American policies rather than America in general. Unlike *banmi*, which may be beyond the realm of rational discussion, *bimi* views may be well-founded, although one may not personally agree with them. But even true "*banmi*," deep-rooted anti-Americanism, seldom spills over into personal animosity against individual Americans.

When discussing sensitive issues or if confronted with anti-Americanism from Koreans, it is best to let them first describe their point of view. Koreans will usually be very polite and indirect in their criticism. Your attention and interest will reflect highly on you. While it is not extremely prevalent, be prepared to address potentially difficult questions about American foreign policy.

Cultural Adjustment

Culture Shock

Everyone will experience some form of culture shock at some point in time. Culture shock can be positive, but it is also sometimes characterized by a distrust and dislike of people, places, and things. Often this manifests itself in negative feelings that everything is done incompetently or incorrectly, that everything is dirty and unsafe, or that one is isolated and the center of derisive attention. It might also be manifested in a generalized, non-specific sense of frustration. In Korea, the symptoms are aggravated by the following:

Communication problems: Difficulties in communication due to the relative scarcity of English speakers and sharp differences in worldview will become a fact of life for ETAs. The real

problem is that some of the people most important in daily survival, such as bank tellers, aren't able to speak English. The fact that many professors and students can speak English is scant consolation when trying to buy water at the corner shop.

Crowds: Seoul and the other major cities are crowded, and many foreigners never quite get used to it, unless they happen to come from a city of 12 million. Others get so used to it that they find themselves wondering where all the people have gone when they return to the U.S. and find the streets comparatively empty.

Constant staring: In Korea, as in Asia generally, it is not particularly impolite to stare, especially at a foreigner who has "unusual" physical features, though this is not so common in Seoul. Some foreigners attract more attention than they would like. Some enjoy being instant celebrities everywhere they go. The emotional impact it makes can vary from day to day.

Direct questions: Americans are often taken aback by what they consider to be very private and personal questions, such as "Are you married? Why aren't you married?", "How much money do you earn?", and "What university did you attend?" It is perfectly acceptable to defer answering questions that are too personal, as long as it's done politely. The constant question, "How old are you?" is necessitated by the language and culture, in which one speaks and acts differently to older and younger people.

Note: Many Koreans love to teach and believe themselves to be experts in many fields including healthcare, exercise, and even America. Some advice can be very helpful, but other times it can be uncalled for or even rude. Please remember, however, that giving advice is often their way of communicating and welcoming you as a friend or family member and it is best to listen politely before you decide to ignore them or offer your own input. Although you don't have to follow their advice blindly (especially if it is unreasonable), try your best to listen and follow their suggestions as it may be a good way to build relationships and learn new things.

Points to Consider

Don't worry! Over 1,000 ETAs have survived and thrived in this very different culture. They recommend approaching teaching with professionalism and enthusiasm, and learning from Koreans and Korean culture instead of expecting or hoping Koreans will think and behave in more "Western" ways. ETAs suggest pursuing personal goals (e.g., travel, taekwondo, music, journaling, etc.), engaging in Korean culture (celebrating holidays, learning a Korean instrument, socializing with Koreans), staying connected to people from home and other ETAs, growing through challenges, and being positive.

ETAs must learn *Hangeul*, the Korean alphabet, before arrival. Learning the two number systems as soon as possible will also be beneficial. It's a good idea to learn at least some basic words and phrases before arrival and practice the language at every opportunity. After arrival, it is a good idea to carry a phrasebook (with Hangeul, not just Romanized words) to study and practice useful expressions on the spot. Koreans will sincerely appreciate these efforts. At times, of course, it may be difficult for them to avoid displaying some amusement at these halting attempts, but don't let that discourage you. Practicing Korean means making mistakes; it's a learning process.

Past ETAs have suggested the key to survival for one year in Korea is to remember that Korea is a different country, and it is **the ETA, not the Koreans**, who have to adjust. The most productive strategy is simply to relax and keep all developments in perspective. The rationale for doing things in ways that may at first seem inefficient or even wrong may become clearer if one keeps an open mind. Of course, there are always times in which no amount of tolerance will allow one to accept certain actions or situations. In these cases, simply walk away; it is unlikely that one English teacher can change all of Korea in one year. Try to avoid generalizing all things unpleasant as being "typically Korean." This kind of thinking makes it difficult to maintain a positive outlook. Furthermore, Koreans differ in attitude and experience, just as Americans do. If certain people are unappealing, seek out others. Korea is full of all types of people with different backgrounds and experiences! Don't take anything too personally, and try to be flexible, positive, courteous, and adventurous. You're in for a remarkable, memorable experience.

Appendix A: Important Contacts

Fulbright Office

ETA Program Coordinator (until August 2011) – Nikolas (Nik) Nadeau

Cell phone: 010-9671-7377 E-mail: eta.coordinator@fulbright.or.kr

NOTE: The ETA Program Coordinator should always be the ETAs' and ETAs' relatives' first point of contact with the Fulbright office. During Orientation, however, the Orientation Coordinators will serve as the ETAs' on-site emergency contacts. Their contact information will be provided via email prior to arrival.

Main Line: 02-3275-4018 Fax: 02-3275-4028

Executive Director – Mrs. Jai Ok Shim shim.jo@fulbright.or.kr

U.S. Embassy

Operator: 02-397-4114 American Citizen Services: 02-397-4442

NOTE: The Embassy has no way to find out how to reach ETAs.

Medical Facilities

Asan Medical Center: 02-3010-7941

Seoul Foreign Clinic: 02-796-1871

Severance Hospital International Health Care Center: 02-2228-5810

Dr. Linton, Emergency Pager: 012-263-6556

Dr. Sung, OB/GYN: 02-790-0802 (0803)

Dr. JaYoung Kwon, Female OB/GYN at Severance Hospital: jaykwon@yuhs.ac., 02-2228-5800, 02-2228-6302

Other Useful Numbers

Police: 112

Information: 114

Emergency: 119

Royal Asiatic Society: 02-763-9483

Tourist Info Center: 02-757-0086

US Embassy Public Affairs Library (Seoul) Mon-Fri 11-6: 02-397-4283

Help-Line (English telephone counseling service) 9-6 Fridays: 02-3272-8600;

Fax (any day): 02-719-8600

Public Transportation (complaint/lost and found): 02-777-5000

Foreign Community Service (FOCUS): 02-798-7529

American Chamber of Commerce: 02-752-3061

Overseas Calling Information

NOTE: Do not dial the '0' in front of Korean area codes when calling from overseas.

Overseas Call Info: 004

Overseas Operator (op-assisted calls): 007

International Access Code from the U.S. to Korea: 011-82

Int'l. Dialing Access Code from Korea to a foreign country: 001 + country code

U.S./Canada Country Code: 1

Appendix B: Address List for Shipping and Mail

1. Fulbright KAEC Address

YOUR NAME, ETA
Korean-American Educational Commission
Fulbright Building
168-15 Yomni-dong, Mapo-gu
Seoul 121-874 SOUTH KOREA

2. Shipping Educational Materials (books and printed material only, only once, and prior to the end of Orientation)

Use ETA's name as SENDER ONLY; see section on APO Mail

Cultural Affairs Officer
Public Affairs (KAEC)
American Embassy
Unit #15550
APO AP 96205-001

3. Shipping Winter Clothes and Other Things Not Needed Until Later

Wait until you get your school's address and have it sent there by surface mail (cheapest option). Surface mail will take 4-8 weeks to arrive. Do not send by APO; it will be returned to the U.S.

4. Where to Have Letters Sent During the 7-Week Orientation

You have two choices. Each has its advantages.

To send mail directly to the orientation site, use the address below. Keep in mind that most mail takes about two weeks to get to Korea. Any mail that arrives after August 19, 2010, may not be forwarded.

Your Name (Fulbright ETA)
c/o Fulbright ETA Office, 2nd Floor
Jungwon University
5, Dongbu-ri, Goesan-eup, Goesan-gun
Chungbuk, South Korea 367-805

Note: You can also choose to have your mail sent to the Fulbright office in Seoul (see number 1 above). Any mail that arrives after Orientation has ended will be forwarded to you. Fulbright will deliver mail to the orientation site periodically throughout Orientation. Keep in mind that mail will usually be hand carried from our offices via train, so large packages may have to be picked up in person when ETAs come to the Fulbright office at the end of Orientation.

Appendix C: Korean Holidays

July 17, 2011	Constitution Day
August 15, 2011	Liberation Day
September 11-13, 2011	Chuseok (Harvest Festival) – 15th day of 8th lunar month
October 3, 2011	National Foundation Day
December 25, 2011	Christmas Day
January 1, 2012	New Year's Day
January 22-24, 2012	Seolnal (Lunar New Year) – 1st day of 1st lunar month
March 1, 2012	Independence Movement Day
April 28, 2012	Buddha's Birthday (Seokka Tanshin-il) – 8th day of 4th lunar month
May 5, 2012	Children's Day
June 6, 2012	Memorial Day

NOTE: The KAEC offices are closed for the holidays of both Korea and the United States.

This list includes Korean holidays only.

Appendix D: Useful Websites

1. Fulbright-related Websites

Fulbright Korea	http://www.fulbright.or.kr
ETA Bulletin Board (ETAB)	http://eta-board.fulbright.or.kr
IIE Fulbright Program for US Students	http://us.fulbrightonline.org

2. Korean Language Programs

Online Language Websites

Life in Korea	http://www.lifeinkorea.com/Language/korean.cfm
Sogang University	http://korean.sogang.ac.kr
Introduction to Korean	http://langintro.com/kintro/index.htm
Korean Language	http://www.kosnet.go.kr/

Language Academies in Seoul

Canada	http://www.ganadakorean.com/
Language Teaching Research Center	http://www.ltrc.co.kr/eng/
Seoul Korean Language Academy	http://www.seoul-kla.com/

3. General Information About Korea

Korea National Tourism	http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/index.kto
Life In Korea	http://www.lifeinkorea.com/
Korea.Net	http://www.korea.net
Cultural Heritage Administration	http://english.cha.go.kr
Seoul Selection	http://www.seoulselection.com/
Korea Web	http://koreaweb.ws/
U.S. Embassy	http://seoul.usembassy.gov/
An American Teaching English in South Korea	http://www.atesk.org/

4. Korea-Related Blogs

The Marmot's Hole	http://www.rjkoehler.com/
Scribblings of the Metropolitician*	http://metropolitician.blogs.com/

Frog in a Well

<http://www.froginawell.net/korea/>

**The author is an ETA alumnus and maintains a Korea-related Podcast as well. The link to the Podcast is available on the blog site.*

5. Other Sites

Arts and Culture

Seoul Arts Center

<http://www.sac.or.kr/eng/>

National Center for Korean
Traditional Performing Arts

http://www.ncktpa.go.kr/html/jsp/eng_2006/index.jsp

Computer

Korean IME (Windows XP)

<http://office.microsoft.com/downloads/2002/imekor.aspx>

English Korean Newspapers

Korean Herald

<http://www.koreaherald.com/>

Korea Times

<http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/index.asp>

Joongang Ilbo

<http://joongangdaily.joins.com/>

International Herald Tribune

<http://www.iht.com/asia.html>

Digital Chosunilbo

<http://english.chosun.com>

Economic Life

<http://english.hankyung.com>

Korea IT Times

<http://www.koreaittimes.com/>

Film and Theater

Korean Films

<http://www.koreanfilm.org/>

Asian DVDs

<http://www.dvdasian.com/>

<http://www.yesasia.com>

Health

Center for Disease Control

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/>

Accident and Sickness

<http://www.usdos.sevencorners.com/>

Program for Exchanges

Eating Disorders

<http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org>

Medical Dictionary

<http://www.medical-dictionary.com>

NIH Medical Encyclopedia

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/encyclopedia.html>

English Books in Korea

What the Book (Itaewon)

<http://www.whatthebook.com/>

YesAsia

<http://www.yesasia.com>

Transportation

Train Info

http://info.korail.com/2007/eng/eng_index.jsp

Express Bus Info

<http://www.kobus.co.kr/web/eng/index.jsp>

Korean Airlines

<http://www.koreanair.com>

Asiana Airlines

<http://us.flyasiana.com>

Seoul Street Map

<http://asp.congnamul.com/seoul/english/map.jsp>

Seoul Subway

<http://www.seoulsubway.co.kr/eng/>

Seoul Bus Routes

http://bus.congnamul.com/SeoulRouteWebApp/view_english/map.jsp

Appendix E: Recommended Books

Travel Guides

*Culture Shock! Korea** by Sonja Vegdahl and Ben Seunghwa Hur

Insight Guide Korea by Tom Le Bas

Lonely Planet Korea by Simon Richmond

Moon Handbooks South Korea by Robert Nilsen

**2004 ETAs contributed to the revision of the 2005 edition.*

Korean Phrasebooks

Lonely Planet Korean Phrasebook by Minkyung Kim and J. D. Hilts

Korean at a Glance by Daniel D. Holt

NOTE: *Langenscheidt's Pocket Dictionary Korean/English, English/Korean* (Turtleback) is not recommended, as it relies too heavily on phonetic Romanized pronunciations. ETAs should only buy phrasebooks that include *Hangeul* (Korean characters), which will be more useful for study and everyday use.

General History/Introduction to Korea

A New History of Korea by Ki-Baik Lee

Korea: Old and New by Carter Eckert, et al

Korea's Culture and Customs by Donald Clark

Korea's Place in the Sun by Bruce Cumings

Learning to Think Korean: A Guide to Living and Working in Korea by Robert Kohls

The Koreans: Who They Are, What They Want, Where Their Future Lies by Michael Breen

The Two Koreas by Don Oberdorfer

North Korea

Comrades and Strangers: Behind the Closed Doors of North Korea by Michael Harrold

North Korea: Another Country by Bruce Cumings

The Aquariums of Pyongyang by Chol-Hwan Kang

The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950 by Charles Armstrong

Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea by Guy Delisle (graphic novel)

Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader: North Korea and the Kim Dynasty by Bradley K. Martin

Literature

An Appointment With my Brother by Mun-yol Yi
Brother Enemy: Poems of the Korean War ed. by Ji-moon Suh
Comfort Woman by Nora Okja Keller
Early Korean Literature by David R. McCann
Mujong by Yi Kwangsu
Samguk Yusa: Legends and History of the Three Kingdoms of Ancient Korea by Ilyon
Sources of Korean Tradition, Vol. 1, 2 ed. by Peter Lee
Surfacing Sadness: A Centennial of Korean-American Literature, 1903-2003 ed. by Yearn Hong Choi
Three Generations by Sang-seop Yom
YOBO: Korean American Writing in Hawaii, ed. by Nora Okja Keller

Miscellaneous Non-Fiction

Hamel's Journal And A Description Of The Kingdom Of Korea 1653-1666 by Hendrik Hamel
Korea: A Walk Through the Land of Miracles by Simon Winchester
Korea Through Australian Eyes by George Rose
Living Dangerously in Korea by Donald Clark
Nanjung Ilgi: War Diary of Admiral Yi Sun-Sin by Yi Sun-Sin
Revolution, and Peace by Horace Underwood (memoirs)
Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women by Dai Sil Kim Gibson
The Comfort Women by George Hicks
The Imjin War by Samuel Hawley
The Kwangju Uprising by Henry Scott-Stokes
Under the Black Umbrella: Voices from Colonial Korea by Hildi Kang *Korea in War*,